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The Methodist Pulpit

THE CALL OF TO-DAY





Abner H. Lucas

THE CALL OF TO-DAY

Sermons preached in the First Methodist
Episcopal Church, Montclair, N. J.

By

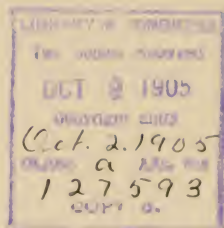
ABNER H. LUCAS, D. D.

OF THE NEWARK CONFERENCE



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To Laura

Wife, Fellow-Student, Helper

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I.

THE RELIGION FOR TO-DAY.

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world."—TITUS II, 11-12.

NO OTHER statement of the New Testament describes more clearly than this a well-rounded Christian life and its relation to the present age. All the powerful manifestations of grace in the past are here related to the future fulfillment of God's purpose, that the present may be the point of illumination. As some powerful searchlight, whose arc of light is focused in a single point where the electric current leaps across the chasm dividing two carbons, so this present age is the point of manifestation of the light that is to flood the world with its divine illumination. The "true Light that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world" has been revealed in Jesus Christ. "In Him was life, and the

life was the light of men." Around that Light are the lenses and reflectors, which are to send it out into the darkness of the tempest. The light of the world is destined to a glorious accomplishment of the Divine plan in a redeemed race. The present world is the *nexus* between the past and that future. This conception of the age helps to a practical and noble purpose.

{ "To serve the present age,
My calling to fulfill,—
O may it all my powers engage,
To do my Master's will!"

It requires the setting of the text for our understanding of it. It is found in the heart of a letter of instructions sent to Titus, a young prince of the ancient royal family of Crete, who had become a Christian, and whom Paul had prepared for the ministry. At an early age he was appointed to have charge of the Churches in Crete. No ambassador was ever more carefully instructed in the details of a difficult and delicate mission than Titus. Hear this great declaration of the purpose of the Gospel of Christ: "The grace of God which bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present

world; looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and Savior Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." That is the meaning of every footprint of Jesus Christ on the paths of men. That is the purpose of that cross outside the walls of Jerusalem.

The Gospel is given to make men of this world Christlike; they are to have large fruitfulness and great achievement in this present age. The New Testament never separates earth from heaven. It brings before us great ideals which are to vivify, to enrich, to realize, to exalt, to perfect all earthly things to fitness for the eternal heavens. The Gospel recognizes the dignity and rights of the body, the mind, and human society. It gives its sanction to their proper development by inspiring and strengthening men so that they may inherit the earth. The broadest life for rational and useful men is presented in Jesus Christ. If ever there was an eloquent protest against narrowness of all kinds, it is the breadth of Christianity. It is wide enough for all worthy muscularities; but it shuts out Roman amphitheatres and modern brutality. It is wide enough for all art; it shuts out obscenity and ghast-

liness. It is wide enough for love, friendship, and home; it shuts out the narrowness that would degrade womanhood. It is wide enough for all true commerce, wealth, and pleasure; but it warns us against covetousness, tyranny, materialism, and protests against the narrowness of making money the goal of life. In Christ all things present are ours. Life is ours. The golden age is in this present world.

Let us analyze this description, and see how perfectly it fits into our lives and this special age. To "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts" is the Emancipation Proclamation of the soul. It is renouncing all right of sin to reign in us. It is denying self. Jesus made it preparatory to all discipleship. It is fundamental in every great spiritual work. The denial of God's rightful authority in life, however it may be expressed, is ungodliness. Following logically comes the enslaving of life to the things of the world. It is the desire of this world as an end of life. Its appeal, St. John tells us, is by the "lust of the flesh, and the lust of eyes, and the pride of life." Maurice says, "In these three divisions I suspect all the mischiefs which have befallen the race may be reckoned." Renouncing sin is antecedent to the development of the virtues of the true life.

To "live soberly" is to live with respect to one's life; to live "righteously" is to have consideration of our neighbors; and to live "godly" is to relate life to the highest and holiest motives. The first teaches us duty to self; the second, duty to society; and the third, duty to God. These three characteristics touch the circumference of human life. Beyond them is no goal. To stand upon these peaks of experience is to view the range of man's greatest attainment. They are the same mountain peaks our Lord pointed out in his summary of the law and the Gospel. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, . . . and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." What survey of worthy effort can exceed these limits? "This present world" refers to a period of time rather than a place. It is to-day. The life we now live, the world in which we are placed, is the opportunity for every man to gain his success or not at all. "*Now* are we the children of God; and it doth not appear what we shall be, but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." There is no vivid, full realization of the present age except we realize im-

mortality in the present moment. To-day is God's day. Emerson said, "Give me insight into to-day, and you may have the antique and future worlds."

I. The present age asserts its demand for thoughtfulness.

This is a wonderful age of intellectual activity. There never were so many minds at work as now. Reading, thinking, planning are the common occupations of our people. The children of this generation have advantages in the public schools which were only possible for the privileged classes in colleges a few years ago. The printed pages which are read would carpet every street and highway of our land. The public and private libraries, with millions of volumes, are within easy reach of all our people. The national guard of these United States is the line of public schools, the seminaries, colleges, and universities. These are the headquarters for the real campaign of our people. It is difficult for us to realize the devotion of this present age to education. Over four hundred thousand trained men and women, who have passed examination through a wide range of work, are the teachers. Not a single sage of Greece could have answered the questions that are asked these teachers. Twelve times as many teachers in America as there were

citizens in Athens when she ruled Greece and dictated law to the race! Forty times as many as the number of the immortal legion which, under Xenophon, cut its way through a continent of barbarians! More than fifteen times as many teachers in America as there were soldiers who followed Hannibal down the slopes of the Alps into the plains of Italy! And more than fifty times as many as followed Cæsar across the Rubicon to the conquest of the world! Fifteen millions of pupils are enrolled in our schools. That is more than all the English-speaking people at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It is more than four times as many as the inhabitants of the original thirteen colonies.

We are trying to be thoughtful in this age. The religion that is to fit the demands of the age must be thoughtful.

It is well that one passion of the age is turned to sober, thoughtful consideration. The thinking of a people will govern their ambitions and achievements. Thought determines character. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." Thinking is fundamental. Actions are only completed thoughts. The final judgment of life is based upon the purposes that have been the motives of action.

"Not in the clamor of the crowded street,
Nor in the shouts and plaudits of the throng,
But in ourselves are triumph and defeat."

If character is dependent upon the thoughts of men, the important question for each one to determine must concern thinking as well as doing. The responsibility is the greater, because our thinking is the result of choice. Environment may influence thinking, but it does not determine our choice. While we live upon a certain avenue we are not responsible for the men and women who may throng the thoroughfare passing our door, but we are responsible for the guests we invite and welcome within our doors. We are the arbiters of our thought. The best and highest thoughts are within easy reach of this present world.

Lowell gave a great truth in his lines:

"God sends His teachers unto every age,
To every clime, and every race of men,
With revelations fitted to their growth
And shape of mind."

Is the appeal of religion fitted to the thought and reason of men in this age? Is the Christian religion adapted to this emphasis of the thoughtful life?

A different appeal is made in the Bible to a primitive race from that made to a more mature people. The dramatic form of the earlier chapters

of the Holy Book was addressed to the imagination and emotions. The angel with flaming sword guarding the gates of Paradise had a message for that time. The ark prepared for the safety of those who would accept shelter from a destroying flood, the smoke-wreathed mountain, the lightnings and thunders, were essential in the world's kindergarten period of education. When God spoke to Elijah, a man of deep emotion and lofty imagination, the wind and the earthquake were the media of communication. But the Ethiopian eunuch, a man of cold business calculation, learns of God, through the quiet study of the Word, of the prophet Isaiah. God's appeal to this age is clearly an appeal to reason. When an erring nation is to be won from their disobedience, God speaks through His servant: "Come, now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." The appeal of to-day is not to the trembling fevers of an awful judgment, nor to the terrors of a broken law, but to a calm consideration of the proper relations between the Creator and His children. Whatever may be the future message of God to men, required by the disregard of the appeal to thoughtful consideration, it is evi-

dent that the greatest plea that has ever been made has been directed to reason. Occasionally bitter complaint is made that the spectacular and tragic are omitted in these latter days. There is no deprivation when God's message shall come to men asking for careful thought. To be capable of thought and conference with the Father of all, is a high dignity and privilege. When your son was a child incapable of understanding the principles of family discipline, you did not ask his opinion as to the simple duties of obedience, study, play, and work. These were required of him without argument. Discussion was discouraged; obedience was imperative. But as he grew to maturity he was trained to think, to value motives, to reach a rational conclusion. The method of family planning was changed, and you invited him to counsel with you. You "reasoned together." It was the dignity of the son and the joy of the father that they could meet upon the plane of reasoning together. It is God's highest appeal to us, when He invites us to sober consideration of His claims and our duties. What wonderful invitations God is making in His Word! In the light of careful and reverent study of the Bible in these days, it may be declared that no man has the right to be called a thinker who is not familiar with the message and philosophy of

God's Word. The open Book in this age means more than the unfastening of the covers of the Bible for popular study. It is a book of presented facts, and has the invitation that men shall weigh its evidence and accept its instruction.

The person of Jesus Christ as revealed in the Gospels, the fulfillment of prophecy, is an appeal to the intelligence of this present world. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things." And the exhortation is given that, in this supreme appeal, "we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard lest at any time we let them slip." Jesus is set before us in the Gospel as God's chosen messenger. He is announced as the "beloved Son in whom the Father is well pleased; hear Him." His words were spoken to the highest judgment of men. "Never man spake like this man." His works opened regions of truth to knowledge that had hitherto been closed to the human mind. His matchless character, which was greater than either His words or works, was, and is, the supreme appeal to thoughtful men and women.

What more convincing revelation could God make to us than is found in the moral beauty of Christ's character? What more powerful word shall He speak to us than the words of wisdom and comfort recorded in the Gospels? Why shall we wait to respond to the appeal of reason, when this high dignity is opened to men? God speaks as directly to men in this present age through their knowledge of need as ever He did with Abraham or Moses. If all that we know, as well as the just conclusions of gratitude, do not bend our knees and open our lips in prayer, what more can God do?

The religion of to-day is busy with the training of the mind as well as the heart. The Church of to-day glories in the great Christian educational privileges opened to her. Her message to manhood is a stirring message of truth to be applied to the world's great need. She is discovering her latest philosophy of history in the missionary efforts that inspire her loftiest devotion. For all the problems of the present, although they may be the problems of the centuries, the religion of this present age is training leaders and thinkers who shall open the way to invasion of God's host to the "uttermost parts of the earth."

II. The present age has demonstrated its enthusiasm for the doctrine of human brotherhood.

In ancient Rome the poet brought applause from all the rows of seats when he said, "Homo sum; humani nihil a me alienum puto,"—"I am a man, and nothing human is foreign to me." It was the triumph of the great doctrine of the brotherhood of man. What was a splendid burst of oratory, has become a glorious realization in this present age. The dignity and rights of men are the core of the great philanthropic movement of to-day. Inventions and mechanical devices have been substituted for the muscular power of the former ages. Society has grown because men have enjoyed time to grow. The productions of machinery have outrun the consumption. Wealth has accumulated, and industry has been organized. Independence has grown less, and dependence has increased. No single workman produces the finished product. The individual must depend upon the community to complete his work and furnish his table. This is the age of all ages when "no man liveth unto himself." The interests of the individual are common interests. Society has put a new emphasis upon "solidarity," "social conscience," and "social good." Travel, commerce, international interests, diplomacy, history, science, and the ideals of the day, are enlisted in the service of the new conception of humanity. Dr. Gordon

has said, "The great mood of this century is the mood of humanity." We are concerned not only about the rights of men, but the duties of men to each other. Never before in history has there been so imperious a demand that the rights of the community and corresponding duties should unite in ushering in the new humanity, wherein dwelleth righteousness, as in this present day. The many and clamorous problems that insist upon immediate settlement are essentially problems of righteousness. The temperance question, the labor problem, the social problem, are before us, and will never be settled until they are solved in righteousness. One of our younger statesmen has recently said that the politics of to-day, and still more the politics of the future, must be the politics of the poor. Alfred Russell Wallace, in "The Wonderful Century," is positive that "true humanity, the determination that the crying social evils of our times shall not continue, the certainty that they shall be abolished, and unwavering faith in human nature, has never been so strong, so vigorous, so rapidly growing as to-day. The flowing tide is with us."

In America as nowhere else has this movement of humanity manifested its presence and power. Our ideals are the broad liberties of humanity. The

inspiring motives in the establishment of this nation were motives of humanity. Its territory has been developed to afford a place of refuge and opportunity for the oppressed of earth. Its literature has grown to strength and dignity because it has voiced the message of humanity. Lowell, Longfellow, Whittier, Stowe, Motley, Emerson, and the others, have been prophets of the great truth of the brotherhood of man. Nowhere as here have the writings of Carlyle, Matthew Arnold, Robert Browning, Alfred Tennyson, great apostles of humanity, been so eagerly read. Our heroes have been Washington, Lincoln, McKinley, whose greatest contributions to our national life have been the offering of service and life for the good of mankind. The attention of the world has recently turned to these shores because under the benevolent and wise guidance of the President of these United States, two warring nations have here found a basis of just and lasting peace. The United States has forged to the front rank of nations because she has sought to be the foremost servant of humanity.

This high distinction carries with it many serious and difficult questions, not alone of international importance, but related to our own life. Our only living ex-President recalls the "good old days, when

the desires of our people were simple and unperverted, when labor was the common lot, economy was honorable, and extravagance was a reproach." He laments the change he sees from the time when scrupulous honesty and fair dealings were indispensable credentials to high business and social standing. That was the age when critical and dutiful participation in public affairs was the badge of good citizenship. Then duty of civic obligation was built strong and deep on foundations of cheerful and contented homes. He notes the changes that have overtaken American life in all its phases. The accumulation of sudden and immense fortunes, the disappearance of the individual from trade and the increasing power of combinations, the public and private extravagance, the credulous toleration of corruption in public life, are baneful influences of to-day. He sees selfishness so powerful as to rob the less powerful of their heritage of right. Surely no observer of our life would deny his conclusion that we need firm conservatism, great forbearance, and high principle in a time of great social need in this land.

"God, give us men! A time like this demands
Clear minds, pure hearts, true faith, and ready hands:
Men who possess opinions and a will,
Men whom desire for office does not kill,

Men whom the spoils of office can not buy,
Men who have honor, men who will not lie,
Tall men, sun-crowned men, who live above the fog
In public duty and in private thinking."

What message has the religion of to-day for this movement of humanity, philanthropy, and righteousness? It has a life. A life is always more powerful than a theory. It presents in its program for to-day, men and women who live thoughtfully and righteously. Christianity is nothing if it is not philanthropic. Its annunciation hymn is the hymn of humanity: "Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." It has a vision of the Christ as He sat in the synagogue and read from the Scriptures, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." The closed book was given the attendant and he said, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." That was the inaugural of Christian philanthropy. The acceptable year of the Lord has dawned. The Golden Rule has been given to men. The principle of righteous-

ness was announced in word and life of Jesus. The religion of to-day must be the "actuality of the life of Christ" if it will meet the requirements of the age. There is no hope for humanity apart from Him. He did not announce a social program for the world, but He did establish a kingdom, and inspire men with the spirit which will work out the kingdom of righteousness. The religion of to-day has a clear and prophetic note: "We, then, that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." It has a consistent and tremendous testimony against the ethics of any man who asks, "Am I my brother's keeper?" The Gospel for to-day is alive with the humanity of Christ. Its message is for a world, a Gospel of Divine Sonship and human brotherhood.

The high passion of the religion for to-day is demonstrated in its missionary efforts. A new and universal concern has taken possession of the Christian Church to supply the spiritual wealth which is in the possession of the Church to a destitute, afflicted, and tormented world. No voice of the religion of to-day is so clear and ringing as the call concerning the needs, the rights, and possibilities of mankind heard in Christian missions. The humanity of God is back of the humanity of Christ

and his followers. The missionary chant is the anthem of humanity's victory. All injustice to individuals and races must disappear before the irresistible power of religion heartily at work in missionary enterprises. To-day a whole world is waiting to be saved. The only world-power that can attempt the conquest is the Christian religion. It is the only absolute and truly imperial power in sight. The new kingdom of the Spirit is here. Its mission is to install Christ in the world as the Supreme Ruler. "The kingdoms of this world must become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ!" The doctrine of human brotherhood was announced twenty centuries ago. But if it is to be truly the property of the world, it must be proved by deeds as well as words. It demands that those who bear the name of the Christ shall stand aloof from the customs and practices which grind the faces of the poor. They must resist all the causes of poverty, sin, and misery. And this is the religion of righteousness which is to be proclaimed and lived in this present age. The only power that will enable men to live righteously is the power of the Christ added to the individual. The old problems of humanity under the new conditions of to-day needs the old apostolic power and a man of to-day. The

new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness will be discovered by men and women who live the life of Christ in the present age. The possibility of loving our neighbor as ourselves is only when Christ is the power of the life. The new Christianity is the old Gospel put into new conditions. Lord Shaftesbury talked with Frances Power Cobbe, who told him of the wrongs of the working girls. The tears came in his eyes, and with trembling voice he said, "When I think that I am growing old, and that I have not long to live, I hope it is not wrong, but I can not bear to die and leave the world with so much wretchedness in it." Alexander Balfour became a member of the Liverpool Town Council. He went there as a Christian man to represent Jesus Christ. In his diary he wrote: "Prayer for state of mind that God can use me to speak in council on the 2d of June. Prayer for wisdom and strength to testify in the council to-morrow against electing publicans to be aldermen."

"Hands that touch the world's great need
To Christ must cling;
Zeal that the cause of truth would speed
Must spread the wing.
In heaven's own light God's work demands
Such consecrated hearts and hands."

III. Doubtless many would say that this present age is skeptical and godless. That is not its

religious characteristic. It has its doubt, but it has its faith. Its faith needs the quickening power of the realized presence of God. It is an age which asks a sign. The age is doubtful as to the evidence that God is in and over all. The present world seeks to discover God at work in the life of to-day. If the miracle could be wrought now as in the days of Christ's incarnation, the age believes it would have great faith. And yet miracles have become so usual that men do not recognize them. Supernatural changes are taking place in human experiences. To the eye of faith a vision of world transformation is opened. The mightiest factor of the world of to-day is the Divine power at work. Religion has been defined by Fairbairn as the "regulation of life through the idea of God; it is the application to all things and all events, of the great, spiritual, moral, ethical, rational elements contained in that idea of God." The sign the world is looking for is a Christlike character. No power to subdue the world of to-day compares with the power of goodness. A holy life is a flower for which this world can not account. There must be another world to explain it. When all the arguments have failed, this world will yield to the influence of a saintly life. "One of the great marks of the youth

of to-day—I am speaking of thinking youth—is a longing for the Divine,” says Ernest Lavisse. What Dr. Van Dyke calls “the human life of God” is the sign for to-day. This is not an easy age, secure and sin-free. It is seeking in many ways to know God. Its search may be misdirected, but the search is made. Restless until it finds rest in God, it has given itself to eager pursuit of pleasure, wealth, ambition, knowledge, and power. But the quest of the age is for God. The sober thought of to-day cries out, “O that we might know where to find Him!” Thought without God will easily become skeptical. The philanthropy of to-day needs God, or it will easily become a shallow sentiment, and lose its inspiration. And religion needs the sober thought lest it become fanatical; it needs philanthropy lest it become selfish. The mutual relation of the great longings of the present day has a most wholesome influence upon each and all. One of our recent writers has described the age as “burdened with a weight of responsibilities to which it has never lived up; disenchanted by the sad advance of a knowledge with which our vital wisdom has not kept pace; stained and dishonored by sins of selfishness, and pride, and impurity, and unbrotherliness, and greed, and avarice, and anger, which our very privileges charge

with a tenfold guilt; delicate and self-complacent offenders, who know how but do not practice; heirs of all ages, who have bartered our birthright, and declined our duty, and sinned against the light a thousand times,—how stand we in the sight of God in these latter days, without a Savior from our sins?" It must know God in His pardoning love and saving grace. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." "The grace of God hath appeared, teaching us that we should live godly in this present world."

The dignity and crown of all life is in this recognition of God as the One "in whom we live and move and have our being." Bismarck, the great Chancellor of Germany, stood up manfully to declare that if he were not a Christian, he would not remain at his post a single hour. "If I did not believe in God, I would do nothing for human masters. Take away my faith and you take away my love of country." In his greatest speech before the Reichstag he thundered, "We Germans fear God and nothing else." That was the secret of his power and the genius of his great career. "Godliness is profitable for all things, having the promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come." The sign that this present age seeks is the

presence of the God of all grace and love in the lives of His professed children. If every Christian were filled with the joy unspeakable, betraying the secret of the Lord in them, the present age would find the religion it is seeking. When Japan, a young and progressive nation, goes to every civilized nation to learn the art of peace and the secret of civilization, it is the great opportunity to proclaim the religion that has made us what we are. To Germany Japan sent students for military training; to England and America came her students for commercial and business training; to every great university she sent her youth for educational preparation for a great destiny. Why did she turn away from professed Christian nations when she sought training in religion? We had not fully yielded ourselves to what we have professed! Our inconsistencies prevented our revealing the power and glory of the God of our fathers. The Japanese turned away from those who had the form of godliness but denied the power.

The general impression prevails that the present is not a favorable time for the life we have been studying. Proofs are easily found that would indicate that this age is not seeking a sober, righteous, and godly type of living. The daily press

indicates that this is an intensely worldly age. The recent revelations of municipal, State, and national affairs, show how corrupt officials in high positions may become. Men who have sacred trusts display an alarming indifference to their duty in protecting the important interests committed to them. Old-fashioned honesty may seem to be a lost principle in the present. Trade has become so exacting that the high ideals of a noble Christian life are said to be inconsistent with the business methods of to-day. The home has become a shelter when business and society release their victims for a few short hours. Plain living and high thinking are out of the fashion. Society is pleasure-mad, and most men are money-mad. Therefore, it is said that the present age is not a good time for such ideals of living. We may easily overestimate the flaunting, corrupt, and worldly influences. The evil of the world is not almighty. Righteousness has not vacated this world. There are thousands of the prophets of the living God in this land and age. God is on the throne of the present world.

But, with all the opposition found in the spirit of this age, what shall the Christian man do? He may yield to it, and accept its inconsistencies. He may drift with the tide. He may surrender char-

acter to social and business customs. That is moral cowardice and religious treason. For such worldliness the age will have respect. There is no place in the Hall of Fame for the traitor. To escape opposition by yielding to it, is the folly of the unthinking.

Or he may attempt to run away from the age. Reasoning that sin and wrong are overpowering, many have concluded that the wise course is to escape from their influence. Thousands of choice souls have followed that path. Mountains, caves, convents, and retreats have been filled with those who have attempted to hide from the sin of the world. But victory does not consist of flight. To be afraid of one's age and run away from it, is faithless. The victory that overcometh this world is of faith. God is not hopeless about this world. He is mightier than wrong. He has redeemed it to Himself, not to be wrested from His loving authority. This world will yet be the place of His glorious triumph.

To try to save our lives by flight is to lose the opportunity to help save it. The joy of living is in winning the victory for righteousness. To miss the chance of working with God in saving a world is to miss life. The shriveled souls that live for themselves have already lost life.

But if treason is not to be accepted and cowardice is to be refused, what shall a Christian do in this present world? The Master's prayer for His followers never contemplated either hiding or surrender. "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil."

This present world is the divinely appointed place for glorifying God and establishing His kingdom in righteousness and power. Our victory must be won by faith. No other world of conquest is promised God's child. No other such school of courageous resistance will be open to you and me. No better results can be obtained than in this present world. The time is given us to wrest triumph out of what we thought was defeat. Never was there a time when moral heroes have a better opportunity than now. The world waits for men and women who are brave enough to claim the victory. What a fine thing it was when Grant, the great commander at Shiloh, rode to an important position held by a large number of troops under the command of one of the most trusted generals. Grant inquired, "What have you been doing?" "Fighting, General," was the reply. "What shall we do now?" "Keep on fighting," was the brief

reply from the silent man. The great Captain of our Salvation finds us in the midst of the contest, but His word is "Keep on fighting."

There is a pile of clay. It has been carried to the pottery for the purpose of making china. It is coarse and unsightly. It soils all who play in it. Anxious mothers urge their children not to touch it. But the potter takes it, treats it, fashions it into forms of beauty and service. It comes forth from the kiln refined china. Thus treated, it has an enhanced value in the market. As clay it was purchased by the ton; as china it is sold by the piece. If the potter should dabble in the clay, it would soil hands and garments. But if he uses the clay with intelligence, he procures porcelain. This present world is crude, coarse, and corrupting, if considered a place of amusement. But the Master-spirit sees in it not coarse clay, but the porcelain. It might be easy to have nothing to do with it; it might be easier to play with the rough materials, but it is our privilege to use the world as the master-potter. This present world and God's children may produce the kingdom of our Lord. The conquering life may be lived where you live.

The saint of to-day will not run away from the opportunity to conquer the present world. He will

glorify his Lord by living soberly, righteously, and godly. He will cheer his courage with the confidence that his Savior Jesus Christ will gloriously triumph over all enemies. Social, business, home, and individual life are not hopelessly arid deserts. Instead of trying to get out of his circumstances, or to go around the difficulties, the modern saint will go deeply into them, and courageously conquer them. He will not timidly inquire for personal safety, but will secure safety for himself by giving safety to others. He will not avoid Mulberry Bend because it is the rendezvous of cut-throats, thieves, and plagues, but will transform it into a beautiful park, where life may grow and blossom.

How much this present age needs the help which a sober, righteous, and godly life could bring! It is like the vast and waterless plains of the West waiting in desolation through the ages for streams of water to flow upon their parched surface. When the mountain torrents are brought to the treeless plains, the desert responds with teeming harvests and speedy enrichment to reward the enterprise. The dry lands longed for the lifegiving waters. The present world will be the garden of the Lord when the refreshing streams, running bank-full through the channels of thoughtful, righteous, and godly

lives, shall carry the fertilizing power of heaven to this present world. The hills and valleys shall shout their redemption because of the pure and abundant streams. Then shall be brought to pass the promise, "The Lord shall comfort Zion: He will comfort her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her deserts like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody."

II.

STRENGTH RENEWED TO-DAY.

"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."—ISA. XL, 31.

SOME promises of the Book are so precious, beautiful, and triumphant that they lure us to grasp the blessings eagerly. We have all been attracted by the note of triumph in this word. It is frequently repeated by the children of God, but the blessings assured are not usual in the experiences of Christians. Though the promise attracts us, we are obliged to confess that our strength fails us; the fact is, that if we run, we are weary; when we walk, we do faint. Our faith does not often take the upward flight of the eagle. We are troubled because the contrast between promise and experience is so great.

And yet the promise is very simple. It is the assurance of strength commensurate with the duty

renewed daily to those who rely upon the Lord. One condition puts these resultant blessings within easy reach of every soul. A child can unlatch the door leading into a beautiful garden. The least of God's children ought to be able to swing open the door of this precious experience. One condition will be followed by four of God's "shalls." It is clear that if the resultant blessings are absent, we have not met the single condition. It is possible that the rhythm of the promise carried us easily past the condition, and we have not studied what is meant by "waiting upon the Lord." If everything hinges upon that condition, we ought carefully to inquire concerning it.

"Waiting upon the Lord," certainly can not mean that men are to be careless and indifferent, aimless and worthless. Folded hands are not the symbols of the waiting servants of the Lord here described. Nor shall the dreams of the visionary satisfy this condition. The vague and impotent pictures that never reach the canvas, and never challenge the artist's skill to reproduce, are not the occupations of those who "wait upon the Lord." To pray is not to fulfill this condition. Wonderful as the prayer-life ought to be to every Christian, it is not what is here intended by waiting upon God.

Prayer has its unique place in every strong and helpful life. It is the most direct of all the helps to the divine life, because it is the freest action of the divine life in the highest realm, and it prepares the way for God to do his own pleasure in the soul of him who prays. Prayer is the soul's address to God, and includes petition, adoration, gratitude, penitence, and aspiration. But all this may not be "waiting," so that this promise can be fulfilled in us.

Several Hebrew words translated "wait" in our English version may help us discover the meaning. In the Psalms we read, "Truly my soul waiteth upon God;" in the margin the suggestion is made of silence. "Truly my soul is silent unto God." This singular expression indicates the utter hush of the soul that casts itself upon God. It is in contrast with the clamor of the unreasoning, the shouts of the impotent and the imperious demands of those of little influence. Waiting in silence until the Divine voice shall be heard, and His message received. In the telephone booth the outer door must shut out the clamor of the street, that the message may be distinctly heard. Waiting upon God is to hear what He will say, to learn His will concerning us. Not, then, in the boisterous demand of the needy, but the confidence that dares be silent before

God, we are to wait upon Him. Take another reference. In that meditation on the power and providence of God, the one hundred and fourth Psalm, the soul is commanded to "bless the Lord" because He is great. His manifold works wrought in wisdom, and filled the earth with riches. The provisions that God has made in the sea for innumerable creatures, small and great, is urged upon the praising soul. "These wait all upon Thee; that Thou mayest give them their meat in due season." Here is implied the dependence of God's creatures who expect abundant supplies. "Thou openest Thine hand, they are filled with good." To wait silently, expectantly, and earnestly, is possible only for those whose faith assures them that when God shall break the silence, the message will be an eternal Gospel; when He shall bestow, the gift will be worthy of the Infinite Giver; when He shall command, we shall hear to obey instantly, as the servant who stands without, alert and eager to hear what the king may say, in order that it may be done. There may not be a special duty to perform in that moment save to wait, listen, and be ready. Here, then, is the suggestion that to "wait upon the Lord" is to be silent before Him that He may speak, to expect that all our needs He will supply, and to be girded with

instant, unquestioning obedience to His will. That is not to sleep, not to be indifferent, not to dream. It is to be awake, confident, separated, prepared for service to a Master who directs, provides, and accepts responsibility as to the success of His cause.

A wonderful illustration of this spirit may be found in the story of the "three great chiefs" of the mighty men who followed David. Many brave soldiers followed the king through all his career. When he fled from his capital and sought safety from his enemies, thirty captains and chief warriors were with him, but only three were "mighty men." They were promoted to their exalted rank because of special service and devotion. One day in the harvest time the Philistines, as was their custom, planned to sweep down the ripened grain and carry it to their storehouses. David and his chiefs came down to the cave of Adullam, overlooking the valley of Rephaim and Bethlehem in the distance. David stood on the brow of the hill and saw his old home, at Bethlehem, held by the Philistines. He longed for the days of his boyhood, and remembered the old well where he often had slaked his thirst when a shepherd boy. He longed for a drink of the water of that well, and as if it were a wish impossible of realization, he said, "Oh that one

would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!" The three mighty men were those who were near enough to hear the wish expressed, and who instantly ran down the mountain side, broke through the Philistine guard, drew water from the well, fought their way back again to David's side, and gave him his desire. It was not a command. David had simply expressed a wish; but the three mighty men were near enough to hear, eager enough to undertake, unquestioning as to the danger incurred, and brave enough to jeopardize their lives as they accepted David's wish as a command. For such a spirit promotion to the chief places was worthy. If we were soldiers of a great king, as Abishai, and his comrades! Others did many brave deeds; but these three waited upon David and won their distinction.

Upon this attitude toward God great blessings are conditioned. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." The word "renew" conveys the idea of change. As one lays aside one garment and puts on another, so may one kind of power for living be exchanged for another. Youth, with its bounding strength, may faint and become weary in natural exercise. The unexhausted supplies of power may fail. The ordinary helps lose

their power to sustain. "The young men shall utterly fall." But a changed power is given those who have the attitude of waiting upon the Lord. When the usual powers fail, He will "give power to the faint." To change from our poor, fancied strength to His strength is like the change from horse-power, which may drag the heavy car a few blocks along the street, to the electric power waiting overhead for some uplifted arm to appropriate its might, and speed the car toward its destination. We may not tell how it occurs, that while we wait upon the Lord we are rid of self-strength, and clothed with Divine strength; but the Word is fulfilled, and we may know that it is done.

The best proof of its accomplishment may be found in the flight of the spiritual life. This changed strength demonstrates itself. It mounts up as with eagles' wings. It can not be feeble. As the growing strength of the young horse proves itself in the speed with which he runs and the load he is able to draw, so do men who have the renewed strength here promised, prove its gift by the using. "They shall mount up with wings as eagles." Strange simile for the Christian life! Ought they not to be compared with doves? The eagle is the only bird whose flight is high enough to measure

the uplift that may be given God's children. It has to do with lofty mountains and deep cañons. It "climbs the spiral" of the clouds, and flies in the face of the sun himself. God's children are invited by promises, and strengthened in experience for great heights. They must be able to climb upward to commune with God. Out there, under the shadow of Pike's Peak, I watched a majestic eagle one summer day. From the lofty eyrie overhanging a deep gorge he surveyed the broad plains and the cloud-piercing mountains. Then, with the ease of his giant wing, he floated off in the thin air, and rose until as a speck in the sky he disappeared from sight. There was no flutter of wing as if conscious that he was unequal to the task. With full repose of strength, he committed himself to the sustaining power he could command from the air. There was not an indication of doubt as to that upward climb he began. Assured before he flew, he hesitated not to match his strength to the upper air, and started toward the sun as if to make a morning call upon a near neighbor. That was the ecstasy of power. That day it seemed clear that no other figure could so perfectly illustrate this strength promised the waiting soul.

To be in the heights with God is the measure

of the soul's possible flight. The best experiences of men have come when they have climbed loftily toward heaven, and have learned in their isolating experiences how great is His help for service to those who wait upon Him. When Lot in Sodom is to be saved, Abraham must be upon the highland to plead. When Moses is to have the law that should remain as the supreme legislation for humanity, he is called away from the hosts on the plains. Let the camp, intent upon amusement and idol-making, be left below, but Moses must climb upward and talk with God as face to face. To be used greatly, God isolates His servants. Paul in Arabia has unfolded to his wondering mind all the meaning of the vision on the Damascus road. Before he can accomplish his best work as an apostle, he must be the solitary scholar in the Lord's school in Arabia. Separation, to God, does not require the isolation of the convent or monastery. It is the separation of experience, not of physical condition, that enables us to be alone with God. Gordon, the great Christian general, found it impossible to wait upon the Lord in China, surrounded by curious Chinese soldiers. They looked over his shoulders while he read his Bible, until he was compelled to rise in the night to secure quiet and opportunity to be

alone with God. The sleeping camp around him, he was able to find Divine help for the work of the coming day. See Washington at Valley Forge cast himself upon the ground in the agony of intercession for the feeble cause which he had espoused. Lincoln, before the battle of Gettysburg, in the heart of the nation's capital, wrestles with God until the assurance of victory is given him. Ye Americans, forget not that the place where the greatest victories have first been won is where some trusting soul has been alone with God, even until the day dawn which brings the victory for the right.

Personality is greater than words or works. Personality finds its scepter of power in the altitudes. The question is not how widely men have traveled, but how high toward God's purpose have they explored? It is a greater thing for the soul to be above the work and business that vexes and worries than to be ground under its crushing weight. The place for God's children is found in the upward flight. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."

There was a strong mountaineer, who one day came down from his lonely home upon table-lands

surrounded by the lofty mountains, to the village in the foothills. The town seemed deserted until he came in front of the store. There people stood gazing at the window of the store as though some curious thing was there exhibited. The tall giant from the mountains pushed near to see what attracted the people to that place. There, chained to a perch in the window, he saw a noble eagle in captivity. As he stood with the curious crowd, there arose in him a strange purpose; and pushing the crowd aside, he went within the store to purchase the noble bird. The transaction completed, the purchaser carried the eagle to the tallest post he could find, and set him free. When the eagle flew away and the mountaineer turned to face the crowd, he was called foolish to waste his money to buy an eagle to be released at once. He replied: "I could not bear to have that bird chained to a miserable stake, and gazed at by a curious crowd. I have often watched him and his mate as they soared among the peaks, up there. I knew he belonged to the mountains, and it would have broken my heart to see him die in that shop." There was another who came down from the heights of heaven to find man in the fetters of his sin. He paid the price, and on the cross outside the city's

wall He made it possible that the lives that belong in the eternal heavens should rise to their place.

"They shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint." If ever there was an anticlimax, this promise seems to be that one. When one has the strength for the eagle's climb, what need is there for running along the dusty road? Why should special reference be made to walking over difficult places? If we may rise above the world, why should we be trained to walk with it? Thus the rhetorician might easily criticise the promise. But the spiritual will discover at once that in experience the promise rises to its highest point when the strengthened are assured that the eagle flight may be less important than the slower locomotion of the traveler. To run and walk are possible after the upward flight. Indeed, it is the Divine principle that God's children go up to commune with Him, in order that they may come down and serve in the valley below. The command of the transfigured Master was to descend from the Mount of Glory to find in the valley the distracted father and his tortured child waiting for the ministry of healing and comfort. Booths on the mountain of privilege are not needed when suffering

humanity waits below for help. In all the ages those who have been called into closest communion with God have been most useful in helping the needy and suffering. Holy men and women bear the balm of healing to the suffering and distressed. The kind of spiritual privilege that enables us selfishly to enjoy the prospect from the mountain-top experience may be questioned whether it be of God or man. The chief justification for withdrawal from the world for the upward flight is to be prepared for the best service to those who wait our return and help. Mr. Drummond told that a Scottish gentleman had been presented with an eagle, but it drooped with sickness and films covered its eye. One day he concluded that the captive ought not to die there, and that he would give it freedom. He took it out upon the high rock, and withdrew that he might watch what would happen. In a short time he saw it lift its head, open its eyes, and look. The eagle's eye saw something in the sky which the man could not see. But as he watched, a speck soon appeared in the sky. It came nearer and grew larger. Finally he saw that it was an eagle sweeping down from the upper heights. With a scream of exultation it swept down and over the sick mate. Then, flying beneath it, lifted on its

strong wings the weak, half-dead thing, until, gathering strength from contact with the messenger from on high, the sick eagle spread its wings and soared away into the clouds. Because the mate had been in the upper air it could see the distressed one, and bring down life and invigoration because it came from the heights. There are times when the urgency of "the King's business requires haste."

"Run and not be weary." The importance of the mission may overcome the weariness of the flesh. We give little heed to the rough way or the darkness of the night when we hurry for the physician to minister to the dying child. We are carried above the difficulties by the love we have for the little sufferer. When the service God assigns us requires that we run, He gives strength for the journey. How much men can accomplish in this power! Every day may be crowded with duty, and yet more can be done. Our Christian work is done by the busy people. The idle are not the volunteers for service. The cause of Christ in the world is being carried forward by those who must run to carry the message. They are enabled to do it, by the changed strength. But walking is the pace of the ordinary life. Every day we walk; we seldom run. Walk-

ing has less exhilaration than running. We must go slowly. The destination is postponed by the deliberate step. Walking is adapted to the long journey. When no urgency hastens our steps, we walk.

What is the walk of a Christian? It is his daily life. Whatever is of routine duty is walking. The every-day life is our walk. At home, in preparation for the day, at the office, at school, at Church, at the missionary meeting, in the prayer service, with the class in the Bible-school before us, the hours that are spent accomplishing the unobserved task, hours filled with annoyances and petty vexations,—all these make up the walk of life. To live through them without growing faint is the greatest victory of life. And that is the promise, "They shall walk and not faint." Along the dusty way, footsore, disappointed, often distressed as pilgrims destined to a far-off land, we may walk and not grow faint. The grace to live the ordinary daily life, full of the monotony of necessary care, is conditioned on our waiting upon the Lord.

Now let us see the picture. Each part is essential to the other; they are not to be separated. There is the young man waiting, as a cavalry man resting upon his horse waiting for the word of command.

Every attitude indicates his expectation that he is to be sent on an important mission. While he waits, he meditates upon his life and work. He discovers that beyond all promise of distinction is loyalty to the cause he loves. He changes the spirit of his life. He is not only a soldier, but a patriot. When the word is given him, he dashes out to accomplish it with the eagerness and devotion of one who fights for his own fireside. In the midst of danger he overcomes an unequal foe, he inspires all who watch him with wonder that he can do so much and so well. He seems not to know weariness. With marvelous freshness and force he accomplishes his mission. It is true he is sustained by the enthusiasm of his great task, but what shall sustain him in the strain of the small frets, wearying things, and stupid tasks? He does not faint. He does not grow petulant and irritable. He has cheer and joy enough for himself and all his friends. He began by waiting upon the Lord, and God accomplished His promise in him. He has the strength for the day.

“ Have you and I to-day
Stood silent as with Christ, apart from joy, or fray
Of life, to see His face ;
To look, if but a moment, on its grace,
And grow by brief companionship, more true,
More nerved to lead, to dare, to do

For Him at any cost? Have we to-day
Found time, in thought, our hand to lay
In His, and thus compare
His will with ours, and wear
The imprint of His wish? Be sure
Such contact will endure
Throughout the day; will help us walk erect
Through storm and flood; detect
Within the hidden life sin's dross, its stain;
Revive a thought of love for Him again;
Steady the steps which waver; help us see
The footprints meant for you and me."

III.

WORK FOR TO-DAY.

"Go work to-day in my vineyard."—MATT. XXI, 28.

IN Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Stories* there is a description of Mowgli, who desired to avenge himself upon a certain tribe. He secured the alliance of their enemies upon the express condition of revealing the master-word. The master-word of the life of to-day is "work." This command is a father's message to his sons. One responded "I go," and went not. The other refused to obey, but later applied himself to the task. The text is Christ's word to all His servants.

"Work is the most important of all arts." To understand it thoroughly would simplify all other knowledge and conduct. Few people, however, really know how to work. In this age, where, perhaps oftener than ever before, we hear the words "work" and "workers," one can not observe that the art of work has made positive progress. Indeed, there is a general inclination to work as little

as possible, or to work earnestly for a short time, in order that one may pass the remainder of life in rest. For some reason happiness and work have been dissociated in men's minds. And on the contrary, labor and sorrow have been united in thought. The youth who is said to be the child of good fortune, is born to wealth and leisure, and thereby freed from all necessity of work. How labor came to be discredited, we do not know. But we are persuaded that, from the earliest time, man has regarded work as a burden. In the Book of Genesis, Adam at first has an abundance without work. But he was driven from that Paradise by an angel with the flaming sword, who pronounces a curse upon the man as he goes forth to earn his living by the sweat of his face. In Athens no gentlemen worked; slaves worked; soldiers toiled, but not the citizens. In those days social position was imperiled when one was compelled to earn his living. But at last we are beginning to learn that work is the ladder set up between earth and heaven.

Work and rest are not contradictory. But so long as the disinclination to work is so positive, there is no hope of bettering our social condition. If work and rest were contradictory, social life would be beyond redemption. Every human heart

longs for rest. The humblest realize the need of it, and the highest seek relief from constant strain. The imagination has found no better name from the future happy existence than the state of eternal rest. If rest is only found in cessation from work, and work is a necessity, then every command to work is a bitter curse. But work and rest are not hostile. It is possible for one to work and rest. The whole nature of man is created for activity. Work is a law of humanity, and nature avenges herself on him who would defy her law. When God gave command to work, He gave the consolation that work is essential to happiness and rest. True rest, therefore, issues from work. Intellectual rest occurs through the perception of the fruitful progress of one's work, and the successful solving of one's problem. Physical rest is to be found, not in indolence, but in the natural intermissions which are given by sleep and daily food, and the needful opportunity for worship. Such a condition of continued and healthful activity, interrupted only by these natural pauses, is the happiest condition on earth. Genuine activity, which is not mere sport, has the property of becoming interesting as one becomes soberly absorbed in it. It has the joy of action and attainment. The greatest unhappiness

which can be experienced is to be compelled to live without work, and finish life without the fruits of accomplished work. Life is not given us to enjoy in indolence, but, so far as we may, to use effectively. Not to recognize this truth is proof that spiritual health has been lost.

The dignity of the fine arts is, that we copy into permanence God's thoughts of the beautiful. The nobility of the handicrafts is, that we copy into permanence God's thoughts of the useful. That is the sanctity of the sciences: we think God's true thoughts after Him. This is our patent of nobility: "We are workers together with God." The workless man is a parasite upon humanity. He invests nothing of personal effort, but expects to derive all necessary good therefrom. If a youth puts nothing into the common storehouse of civilization through his work, and takes out from a storehouse filled by his ancestors, he is a pauper patrician. If another, putting in nothing through work, takes his support from the public poor-house, he is a pauper plebeian. In either event, he who takes something out of life and puts nothing into it, is a parasite and thief. "Let him that stole, steal no more, but rather work." The very essence of Thomas Carlyle's message to the idle classes was, that they should

produce something. The idle rich and the idle poor are miserable, not because they are either rich or poor, but because they are idle.

The false conceptions of the dignity of work have imperiled the happiness of our people. Social reformers, so called, are inflaming the people by telling them that work is drudgery; that the worker is a slave and a bondman, who must rebel against the captains of industry. They are taught, not to find happiness in their work, but in more wage. The social problem is not how to escape work, but how to be adjusted to work as a means for higher manhood and womanhood. If the reward of man's work is in terms of gold, we might ask that the man who has a hundred millions should immediately divide his fortune. But the reward of work is not gold. The true reward of good work is the consciousness that it is well done. What greater insult can be offered a thoughtful man than to tell him that the reward of his work is in wages, when he may work as hard as the man who has a hundred million! There is peril to modern society in the doctrine that work is degrading, and that its reward is only in wages. Our thinking ought to be regenerated from the bottom. We need to teach our children, by day and by night, that happiness

is in the work we do, and that the consciousness of its being done as well as possible is the greatest reward. Then are we "workers together with God," and have a peace which the world's wage can never give, nor its absence take away.

We do well, however, to remember that not all work is of equal value. There is spurious work, which is directed to fictitious ends. A sagacious person must look for something which is worth his honest effort. Here is the reason that the happiest workmen are those who absolutely lose themselves in their work. The true artist is he whose soul is wholly occupied with his art. The true scholar is infatuated with his task. These people whom we call "one-idea'd" are accomplishing the true and necessary work in the world.

I. Let us consider the moral uses of work. It acquaints man with nature, and gives him a liberal education. Man's knowledge of himself and the world in which he lives, comes from his work. Working with the soil for food, man discovered the beginning of agriculture. Working with a forked stick, he invented his plow. Carrying his burden across the rivers, he thought out his boat. Stooping under his load, he mastered the horse, and made him bear his burden. Working with

wild roots, man found the grape and apple. Working in stones, he wrought out his house. All the fine arts, all the knowledge, came from the daily task. It is work that instructs man and disciplines him in the great university of daily life. There is a culture to be found in the school of toil.

God has appointed work for the training of the individual in morals. Men speak of business as a sphere of temptation and testing; but it is also a drill-room in which youth may be taught all the fundamental moral qualities. Our Lord Himself was trained for His mission as a great religious teacher in a handicraft. He became the world's greatest reformer, and His preparatory school was a carpenter-shop. He developed all the root moral qualities that blossomed into the higher spiritualities in the years of His toil, until the age of thirty. In His association with men, He developed sympathy with them, and an exquisite gentleness and tenderness toward poor and weak. The beginnings of power over men is in sensitiveness and sympathy. Influence is possible only from personal experience of the failings, privileges, ambitions, disappointments, and successes of our fellow-men. No self-centered man can develop sympathy with his fellow. To break down the walls

of prejudice and develop a knowledge of one's self and one's companions, is to develop the primary moral qualities essential to the highest character. God enters every child in the school of work, that he may become a Christian.

True work will associate the highest ideals of beauty with its task. Nothing is more certain than that we make our task beautiful or menial by the spirit we put into it. There are two ways in which a house may be approached. On one of our avenues a little home has been built during the past few months, but the contractor's view is one, and the owner's view is another. The builder toils for his money. He had no particular enthusiasm for the structure. Disliking his work, he always thought of pay-day. He was glad when the foundation was in, because it gave him his first installment, and he was glad when the roof was on, because it gave him the second payment. He hurried the inside finishing, ever thinking of the gold named as his wage. He concealed under laths and mortar poor work, because he loved not his work, but his wage. How different the owner's attitude! He is an honorable, hard-working youth. This is his first house. To him the walls and ceilings are as lustrous in their loveliness as the walls of heaven. They

are covered with pure ideals, holy affections, and the solemn love and prayer that happiness and beauty would fill that home. There is no decorator like the heart. The soul can breathe the spirit of beauty into any task. Remember how Fra Angelico painted upon his knees, and borrowed a divine luster for his canvas. Remember how Milton, lifting his sightless eyes toward the sky, saw the heavens open, and Christ standing at the right hand of God; and from his vision brought a splendor to his solemn poem. The time has come when we must practice the art of carrying our work up to the higher spiritual level. Once, when the cathedral was dedicated, the priests fell upon their knees in solemn worship. In the future we shall learn to enter a shop or store or factory in the spirit of the reverence of our great Master, who said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." We shall then know what it is to be "diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

Why is it, then, that there are thousands of men and women who defend with passion the Bible teachings concerning work, and yet take one day at the most, or perhaps none, for work? It always costs an effort to rise above the customary condition of physical indolence. Moral laziness is original

sin. Yielding to natural dispositions, the most active men would amuse themselves with playthings rather than work with tools. The love of work must, therefore, proceed from a motive stronger than that of indolence. It may be a low motive of selfishness, or it may be a high motive, as the sense of duty or love. The second motive has this advantage, that it is more permanent, and does not depend upon mere success in the work. One can as well accustom himself to work as he can to self-indulgence, extravagance, or laziness. No virtue is ever securely possessed until it becomes a habit. Thus it is that as a man forms the habit of work, he establishes the permanent resistance of indolence.

But there is a higher reward in store, not only at the end, but even now, for those who work. They enter more deeply and fully into the joy of the Lord. What is our world, with its sun and stars and harvest, but the going forth into outer physical expression of the inner thoughts of the ceaseless Worker named God? Every hour God is toiling upon His task. If for one instant He ceased to work with men, this world would be blown away by a single breath. There is no holier fellowship than to be a co-worker with God. It is the only life that is worth giving to others. There is small

blessing in what we do for others, which costs us nothing. A man may speak to us eloquently, but if he speaks only words, we are no richer for listening to them. Only when we serve in love, do we either find deep joy for our own hearts, or true blessings for others.

II. If work is all important, we need to consider the field of our work. Where is the sphere of Christian service? "Go work to-day in *my vineyard*." God's vineyard is world-wide. The sphere of work is not to be circumscribed. God has great educational plans for men. He commands some of His sons to co-operate with Him in training men to think right. He reveals himself as interested in the truest art, in literature, in philosophy, in philanthropy, in commercial, social, and domestic fields. He opens opportunities where all his children may serve well. The great world is God's vineyard. The work for to-day is wide as the world and important as opportunity.

The Christian Church is, in a special sense, the Master's vineyard. It is commissioned to lead men to righteousness, to teach them the experience where, with new heart and new spirit, they will serve God and their fellow-men. Men are to be made good. Hearts are to be set right with heaven.

The conscience must be instructed. The will must be strengthened to do good. Life will never be perfect until a great spiritual work is accomplished. It is a serious mistake to neglect the spiritual in the world's great work. The spiritual is at the roots of civilization. The supreme questions of life are, after all, the spiritual questions. This spiritual vineyard is in the midst of the universal field. The whole field will never be fruitful until the spiritual vineyard has been cultivated. There is a gentleman living in the Berkshire hills who delights in the propagation of expensive bulbs. When he began he imported a few of the rare bulbs, and carefully developed the plants in his own conservatory. In time the stock increased, so that his lawn was beautified with these expensive plants. Later the roadside and every fence-corner of the great farm smiled with the beauty of the flowers. He imported the few at first, from Holland, but he multiplied and transplanted them until the whole landscape was enriched by their color. The spiritual life must afford men and women noble thoughts, high and unselfish ideals, great conception of domestic and public life, that are to be transplanted in the wide world. "The wilderness shall blossom as the rose," when men find in the highest spiritual serv-

ice the flowers that shall transform the world into the garden of the Lord. Our true work is for God in His vineyard.

III. Several encouragements to work are found in the figure employed in our text. There are discouragements of small endeavor, narrowness of life, but the figure of the vineyard is full of encouragement. It suggests the element of infinity. Vegetation has this idea. The multiplication of the seeds sown, gives the harvest to the husbandman. From the seed sown, new grain grows. An almost infinite expansion is the law of vegetation. From one grain of wheat may come a nation's harvest. One thing will produce many things. All true work in God's vineyard has that element. Good acts and generous words have the power to multiply themselves. One good service has all good service. One righteous act will reproduce itself in higher and better life in the community. One of the great doctrines of this generation is the conservation of energy. We have believed that force is convertible, but never lost. We discover that heat, light, and electricity are resultants of motion. The latest science declares that there is but one force. It has been converted into all forces. Every noble thought produces another, and is fruitful as a seed multi-

plied in the harvest. If it is true, in physics, that one force can be converted into all forces, who will excuse himself from work in God's vineyard because he is limited in power? If we can do one thing, we have the quality of manifoldness. The noble deed of to-day will surely reappear to-morrow. In the surprise of those who were rewarded for good service to the Master, they said, "Lord, when did we see Thee sick or in prison, and ministered unto Thee?" The answer was, "In that ye ministered to My brethren, ye ministered unto Me." One good service has the element of all good services. Variety and infinity of work can be developed from the sincere effort to do one thing best.

But we are compelled to work where we stand. What we may do in our little corner of life seems unworthy of the attempt. But the law of universality will make it pervasive of the whole sphere of service. It is easy to understand how the missionary who goes to China may reach out in a wide range of influence, but it is difficult for us to comprehend how any other service may have the same extension. Work for God is universally valuable. Christian service in the most obscure community has a power to become widely helpful. There is no such thing as "wasting sweetness on the desert air."

That may be tolerable poetry, but science laughs at that statement. Every magnolia, rhododendron, myrtle, sweet spice, and rose makes sweet the air about us. From the tropics and temperate zones come the sweet breaths that perfume the room in which you tarry. Nature wastes nothing. Each tiny flower makes a distinct contribution to the fragrance of the world. No one is shut up in so narrow a street that his service may not minister to the well-being of all men.

There is an immortality in the work done in God's vineyard. We are often tempted to bewail the fugitive influence of our well-meant effort. Since the day be so soon over, we sometimes argue that we need make no special effort. We are here to-day, and gone to-morrow. The shadow quickly follows the sunlight. Life is so fleeting that we hesitate to perform any work that is not permanent. That is the argument of short-sightedness. Genuine work will multiply itself into permanence. John Stuart Mill shows in his discussion of "Liberty," how again and again persecution put down the truth. He declares that the Reformation was buried twenty times before its final and glorious triumph. In Flanders, Italy, and Spain, the essential message of the Reformation had been proclaimed as

earnestly as in Germany. But each time it was crucified and buried. With wonderful persistency the spirit of liberty rose from its grave, and blossomed in Luther's Reformation. The reason it could not be destroyed was the divine quality of perennial life.

"Truth crushed to earth will rise again;
The eternal years of God are hers;
But error, wounded, writhes in pain,
And dies amid his worshipers."

It has been discovered that the smallest grain of musk retains a penetrating perfume for seven thousand years. If the Infinite Creator can hide away in that tiny grain an odor that will manifest itself for seventy centuries, may He not give permanent influence to the smallest worthy service rendered? Recent science declares that radium will exert its force for seventy-seven thousand years with undiminished power. It is not strange that a kind word may live to eternity. Human action is more significant than we dreamed. We live in a larger sphere of service than we knew. To work in God's vineyard is to work to-day. But through it we serve all days.

On John Ruskin's desk was a paper-weight made of a block of chalcedony. Deeply carved upon it

was the word "To-day." The great prophet of modern life used to-day. To-morrow could bide its time, while to-day was on the throne. To-day is always here. To-day is the only opportunity we have for life's work. We never work to-morrow. Action belongs to the present. Whatever is the duty for to-day, let us do to-day. "Son, go work to-day in My vineyard," is His command. We must work while it is to-day, for the night cometh when no man can work. The clocks can not keep to-morrow's time. The hands on the dial point to the present. God's promised help for work is to-day.

To-day's work is most important. Great issues hang in the balances to-day. Far-reaching reforms are here to-day, appealing for our help. All the problems of temperance, amusements, Sabbath observance, purifying our politics, exalting our home life, the ennobling of the individual, the training of children, the soothing of pain, the cheering the discouraged, are all here to-day. If all God's children should do as some of us in all the world's work, the day of the world's redemption would not be at hand.

The present opportunity is ours to revive the office of the good Samaritan in the world. To-day noble tasks are assigned every one who will re-

spond to the command, "Go work in My vineyard."
We have come to our kingdom for to-day.

"Make this a day. There is no gain
In brooding over days to come;
The message of to-day is plain
The future's lips are ever dumb.
The work of yesterday is gone,
For good or ill, let come what may;
But now we face another dawn.
Make this a day.

The day is this; the time is now;
No better hour was ever here—
Who waits upon the when and how
Remains forever in the rear—
Tho' yesterday were wasted stuff,
Your feet may still seek out the way,
To-morrow is not soon enough—
Make this a day."

IV.

THE COMMANDED STRENGTH.

"Thy God hath commanded thy strength."—PSA.
LVIII, 28.

It is a great distance between David and Oliver Cromwell as he led his Ironsides up the heights of Dunbar; but the song and the melody were so mighty that they swept over the intervening centuries. When the indomitable Puritan looked up those heights and saw the possibilities of defeat, he roused the courage of every soldier by crying out, "Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered!" Marching against the Scots, he summoned every follower with the words, "Thy God hath commanded thy strength." The text is one of the songs which those of us who have no battles of Dunbar to fight may well sing in the midst of the wearisome problems of daily life. Our battles are more difficult because they seem so insignificant, and are without the inspirations of the noble and picturesque to stir us to our best endeavor. But they determine

important questions of life for you and me. They are associated with everything that the true life here and hereafter may demand.

This great song begins where every immortal message must begin: in the heights above human life, and not on the plains of daily experience. It begins with God. It is a vision of the greatness of God and the sky which overarches this life of ours. No great melody can be brought up from the earth unless, before you begin to sing, the great sky creeps in, and the atmosphere of the Infinite shall give the setting for the finite music. God must be the greatest fact of human life. Behind, before, below, and above, life must be the enveloping fact of a great God before there can be a melody. Every David, Cromwell, and warrior against serious difficulties, must begin the song that will cheer him to victory in the vision he has of the eternal God. As out of the sky must come rain and sunshine to develop the harvests, so what is above, and not what is below, is the primary importance in human life.

Humanity's significance is to be found in its relation to a great God. If you will describe what your thought of God is, it will be easy to tell what kind of a world you live in. If you believe Him

to be powerless in the midst of injustice, you must believe that injustice has a right to rule here. But if your God is like the one who appeared to David's vision, you must believe that justice will win in the battle, and injustice must depart from the field in defeat. If your idea of God is that of a vengeful being, a kind of Omnipotent Autocrat, ruling without feeling, with simply a pride in the demonstrations of the power, with no enterprising love, with no down-reaching affection which seeks to help the weakest creature, you will accept a world where might makes right. It will be easy to know what kind of a world you live in, and what sort of a government you will allow over you, and what kind of a person you will ultimately become if we may know your conception of God. If you have any melody in life, it must come from the skies. You will always be like the ideals you cherish. Your own life is simply repeating on a small scale the vision you have of God in the sky.

This text reveals the conception which this old warrior had of the Divine purpose of his own life. The psalmist tells us the meaning of his life problem, and what his business must be in the world. He discovered what God was trying to do through him. As he studied his life, he saw that God was

making a tremendous demand upon him. He was surrounded by difficulties, beset by foes, which seemed to him like the invitations and commands requiring all of his strength. All his trials appealed with a kind of eloquence, demanding that all the forces he might summon should be employed, inviting him out into many fields of opportunity and enterprise. The demand upon the king was not for a half-hearted effort, but for all the effort he could command. When he seemed weak before the mountains of difficulties in his journey, he learned that God intended thus to call upon him for a supreme effort. The awful rivers of sorrow he must cross, the agony of footsore enterprise, and the weakness of his endeavors, he understood to be voices, saying, "Thy God hath commanded thy strength."

This is the secret of many of the difficulties that beset our lives. God wants all the power we have to be surrendered to Him. He is interested in developing all possible strength for us. The trials and discouragements that beset us are proofs, not of the hostility of God, but of His tender consideration of us. They indicate that He sees strength in us to command.

Here, then, is a splendid vision of human life and of God's purposes in that life. The greatest

achievement in the individual is character. The sight that must be dearest to the Infinite Father is the development of a soul into His greatness and power. That purpose has filled the vision of God from the beginning of time. He has planned to make man the crown and glory of all His creations. But when we look into human nature and know its questions and answers, we discover the inflow of power is measured by the outflow of strength, and must be persuaded that there is a deep purpose at the bottom of all this strenuous life. Human character is the greatest product of creation. Character is the eternal result at which God has been aiming from the beginning. Along this path His purposes have traveled to develop His own likeness in humanity. If this is the supreme desire of the Creator, what a significance it gives to life! But what is this character which fills the great thought of God? To have it I must have something which a star does not possess. The sun is obedient to a law, but he can not do other than shine. He is never able to say "no," and turn backward in his fiery pathway. He can not disobey. If I have nothing more than a star possesses, I can never reach the loftiest heights of human character. I must have the power of determination within me. My will must be free. If

I shall come to the greatest possible life, I must have something which the great Niagara does not possess. Although it can bear a thousand rainbows upon its bosom, and hang its spray like a veil of immortality, it can not for a moment feel the thrill of life that comes to God's children. It can dash itself into a foam before my eyes, and become a spectacle of delight, but it can not know one moment of the satisfaction which may come to me. If I am to be God's man, I must have the force of life within me, enabling me to think and decide the plan and execute, to know and do. The lofty mountain that stands before me can not think. It has never reached a conclusion from consideration of two thoughts. It may bear upon its hoary head the fleecy clouds, it may carry in its bosom rich mines of ore, and may be founded upon granite, but it can not discover the truth. I can think. I must find the truth. To attain greatness of character I must attain it.

Is it not plain that the very necessities of our being and God's way of leading are matched with infinite wisdom? Do not even our sufferings perfectly demand what we ought to be? Let us illustrate this by the way men gain truth. Every truth is not self-evident. God has not written all His

messages in easy manuscript, so that "the wayfar-
ing man, though a fool, need not err therein." Neither is truth packed in parcels, so that one can procure as many boxes as he may desire. It requires effort to discover truth in its application to life. Thousands of schoolboys have wondered why God did not save them the agonizing search after truth. But the Infinite Love knows that all the possibilities of youth and manhood never will be realized until painstaking study is given. To obtain an education challenges the strength of the student. What a strange thing is truth! You can not discover it and hand it over to me. It never will be truth to me until it is true to everything in my nature. How can it become truth to me? Only as I seek it and find it just as you found it. Therefore the teacher is not able to impart it to the scholar. His highest ministry will be in guiding the scholar to find it for himself. But what a discipline is in the search! The man who refuses the effort necessary to find the truth will never know what he has lost by his indifference. Let us stop wondering why, at the beginning, the race did not have railroads and telephones, steam-engines and printing-presses. God is less anxious to manufacture telephones than to develop manhood. That is

the purpose of the world. The stars that swing in the blue of the night have for their ultimate purpose the leading of the sons of God. We are brought by lines of development to this high Spirit. We never can have the truest character until we call forth the talents within us, in spite of the difficulties presented. Have you ever wondered why you are subject to temptation? Because God has determined to make a man of you. This pulpy flesh is not manhood, it needs bone and muscle. Emerson said, "Difficulties exist to be surmounted." That is the reason of their being. They are commands upon our strength. They are invitations sent out from heaven to earth. They contain intimations that God still believes us capable of developing real character. If we believe this, we should think of life differently from our ordinary conception. If the loving Father wanted weak children, He would simply remove the testings, barriers, and battles from life. These obstacles are in life because He has determined to make men strong.

It is urged that if this is the real purpose of life, there is no help in the great cross that is over against the sky of Calvary. Why did Jesus suffer and die? Why did He pray in agony in the garden of Gethsemane? What is the meaning of the atone-

ment? May we not expect that the cross of Christ will relieve humanity from its strenuous endeavor to overcome difficulties? The cross was the greatest command God ever gave humanity. The power of Calvary stirs all the nobility in life. Look at that noble man in the midst of ignoble companions! They do not value His high sentiment and generous purpose, but His noble nature inspires the entire multitude to feel that it must perform some splendid service. That is the most powerful way of commanding men. The influence of a right example has a conquering persuasion.

Jesus came into the world to be its King. He found no other throne than the cross. He died there. His figure is ever associated with the cross. Christ and His cross are the symbols of true religion. No other symbol so comprehends His whole incarnation. The manger-cradle does not represent His whole earthly life. No miracle that He performed is accepted as His emblem, but always we put His cross as His sign. What an influence He has over men because of that cross! Christ upon the cross has unparalleled sovereignty. He is there as the expression of an Infinite Love. He is the Eternal Sacrifice for sin, "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world."

“There was no other good enough
To pay the price of sin;
He only could unlock the gates
Of heaven, and let us in.”

But Christ upon the cross was more than the world's atonement. He was its commanding inspiration. So the cross stands there to develop every element of strength in the human soul, as well as to be the world's atonement. When I see Him lifting up His hands in holy benediction over His enemies, my soul says, “I can do that. I can love my enemies.” I look at Him, and His example commands my strength, so that I will say, “I will love my enemies.” I see Jesus bearing His cross for others, and He commands me so that I can say, “I will do that.” “I will take the burdens of others, and they shall become my glory and strength.” Whenever He commands my strength, my whole nature must respond.

Heaven will be a manifestation of God's educational method in developing our strength. Heaven is not simply a resting-place. Too often we put an untrue emphasis on the word “rest.” Rest, from what? Have we ever struggled and seriously suffered for the right? We must do something to be entitled to rest. Unless our lives shall be busy in doing good, heaven can not be the place of rest.

This low conception of heaven grows out of a low conception of life. Rest is the benediction for those who work hard. Have our ideals ever cost us a sacrifice? Have we ever gained the mastery through struggle? Have we ever heard God's voice commanding our strength in the midst of the difficult places of life?

Lord Nelson had won many victories on the sea, but at last one added victory was to come to him. It was when the tri-color of France floated upon the ships that surrounded his fleet, and the grain-ships that were bringing supplies to him were captured and their supplies fed the enemy. He needed more frigates to win a decisive victory. As he paced the deck of his flagship, fretted by the weakness of his fleet in the presence of so powerful an enemy, he said, "Should I die this moment, you would find on my heart the words 'more frigates.' " Day after day he scanned the horizon, but saw victory nowhere. The English fleet wanted power, and did not know how to obtain it. But did Lord Nelson fail? He was buried at last in a coffin made from the masts of the enemy's flag-ship; the desperation of his weakness commanded the strength of the heroic English commander of the sea, and with what ships he had, under the control

of the bravest officers and men, he conquered the enemy. Many of us are here seeming weak before the allied forces of evil. A victory over the wrong would mean so much to us. To drive back a villainous passion to its dark lair, forever to destroy a carping, critical spirit, would be a splendid victory in our lives. Yet, in despair, we say we need more strength. The Eternal God has the power, and the consciousness of our weakness is His command of our strength.

No man need fail in life's battle because he is too weak. "The Lord will give strength unto His people." The allied forces of heaven are within his call. He need not attempt to fight alone. He may with the vision of faith see God's armies and horsemen all around. He may be able to say, "They that are for us are more than all that can be against us." But the Divine help comes only to those who lead heroic lives. We must be educated by our difficulties. We must face our trials, relying upon the assured strength from above. We are not put in a world of defeats, but of victories. The divine opportunities for power are opened to those who accept them as God's commands to the utmost consecration.

V.

JOY FOR THE MORNING.

"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."—PSA. xxx, 5.

HERE are four familiar words strangely knit together. Day and night are commonplace changes. Joy and sorrow are not strange words. But to bind weeping with the night, and joy with the morning, and set them in contrast, has been done in this text.

Whatever may be said by philosophers, it is true that from the first conscious hour to the last moment of life, man desires to enjoy what he calls happiness. To find joy has been the great quest of mankind. The hope of obtaining it has stirred men to their utmost endeavors. The modern world has not ceased to expect the era of joy to dawn upon the world. It is confident that when the annunciation hymn of Bethlehem shall have been fulfilled, joy will be the abiding tenant of a redeemed humanity. The present age will not be content with a

mere philosophic composure, nor will it be satisfied with pleasure as a substitute for joy.

It is true that this generation has sought out many inventions, and perfected many comforts and conveniences. It has added increased wealth to the world's treasure. It has lessened the hours of labor and extended the average life at least ten years. One might expect to find the cup of the world's joy full, and all the people happy. This world has been fitted up for man as no palace was ever furnished for a king. Wordsworth and Agassiz believed they could spend centuries enjoying the rich provisions of the earth. And yet the inventions and development of science have not increased the art of joyous living. In many respects this is an age of sadness. Discontent mutters in our factories and weariness sighs in our homes. Man was made for blessedness; joy and peace are prime requisites to good work; the earth is a beautiful, bountiful garden, and yet man declares that the present age is miserably sad.

The serious mistake has been made in seeking happiness for its own sake, and expecting to find it upon the surface of our circumstances. Position and authority are not essentials of happiness. Joy is deeper than the surface of life. It is at the

heart of life. Joy is a quality of living. It is spiritual. St. Paul declares it to be one of the fruits of the Spirit.

Men are not wrong in wishing for joy, but are mistaken in the way they seek it. What is joy? It is the soul's satisfaction in what Dr. Van Dyke has called "the vital impulse—the rhythm of the inward life—the melody of a heart that has found its keynote." What the song is to the meadow-lark, what the beauty and fragrance are to the flower, what ripeness is to the apple, what culture and refinement are to the intellect, joy is to the soul. As vulgarity and ignorance indicate a neglected mind, so unhappiness and misery proclaim a neglected heart.

The soul was made for joy and peace. Next to the art of living righteously and kindly is the art of living in happiness and quietness. Joy is not only a privilege of life, but is a duty. The fingers may touch the strings of sorrow and pain on the harp of the soul, but the blessed nature will vibrate with joy even in sorrow. The full chord of the soul will chorus with joy the plaintive strain of suffering. Though this world was built as the home of joy, we may calmly confess that troubles, temptations, and adversities oftentimes tarry in it for a

time. But they are not abiding guests. They are the transients in life hostelries. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Joy is the landlord. Joy is the host. Joy has the right to possess this life. Afflictions and disappointments visit with us, but joy will abide forever. This is the only world in which God's children may suffer, for in the world to come "sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

We have discovered that many things we suffer work for the fullness of joy in transforming the bad to the good, the selfishness into sympathy. Jesus had a joy before Him, even in enduring the cross and despising the shame. Steel is iron plus the skillful tempering of the fire. Statues are marble plus the sharp blows of the chisel in the hand of the artist. But the fire and the blows are not for the purpose of causing pain. The joy of the crucible is to release the flashing diamond. The joy of the chisel is the emancipation of the fair form from the marble. Even suffering may be commissioned to bring joy to the soul.

It is not by chance that men have desired happiness and sought joy. God has revealed His thought of joy in the singing birds, the gurgling brooks, the golden clouds, the smiling babe, the serene light

that glows upon the face of the aged saint. God wills joy for all His children. It is His gift to the surrendered life, which finds its rhythm in obedience to God's control.

Jesus Christ was the world's joy-bringer. His great inaugural Sermon on the Mount rings the wonderful chimes of blessedness for all men. Nine times he declared that the life is "happy" which follows Him. His life and words enlarged the kingdom of joy for this world. His Gospel is the blessed Gospel because it affords the soul the satisfaction of spiritual attainment. The note of the Gospel of Christ is never a sad moan, but the shout of gladness. Its good word is concerning a joy that may be full.

There is therefore a divine doctrine of joy for this world. The purest worship is the worship of a God-fixed joy. "The joy of the Lord is your strength." Let us accept without reserve the teaching of our Lord concerning the possibility, nay, even the duty, of happiness. It is the divine stamp of His religion. The man who is not a joyous Christian is not the right kind of a Christian. The worrying, distressing disciples of our Master have certainly not received His peace which He gave unto them.

The Church has failed in her greatest achievements because she has lost her joy. The challenge the early Church gave the world was the challenge of an exultant joy. Accepting that challenge the world has always suffered defeat when the "joy of the Lord has been the strength" of the Church.

Moderator Van Dyke closed the sermon before the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church by prophesying that "the Church that the twentieth century will hear most gladly and honor most sincerely, will have two marks. It will be the Church that teaches most clearly and strongly the truths that Jesus taught. It will be the Church that finds most happiness in living the simple life and doing good in this world."

No natural phenomena are more familiar to us than night and morning. Poetry, painting, and statuary have regarded them in their most picturesque aspects. Piety has sung its soothing vesper-hymn, or joined the gathering shades of evening and the broadening light of daybreak. All the physical, intellectual, commercial, and social—perhaps we might venture to add, the religious—arrangements of mankind adjust themselves to these natural divisions of time. Let us partially re-

examine them, not for intellectual recreation, but for spiritual profit.

When the axial revolution of the earth brings night to the side of the planet we inhabit, we are first of all conscious of the departure of light. That is so obtrusive a phenomenon that all see it. It is not quite so open to observation that a change has taken place in our thermal and electric condition, but it is no less true that the active agencies of the great source of heat and electricity have ceased to play upon us as well as that of light. There is absence of light, departure of heat by radiation, and a change in the electric condition, and these affect all plants, all beasts, all men.

The difficulty of seeing causes a suspension of work. Men's restlessness leads to the production of artificial lights, but these must necessarily be limited. A lighthouse may show where the coast is, but it does not reveal the rocks. We may make a light to read our books, but it is always injurious to the eyes. We can never make night day. Men can not be about factories and shops and wharves and farms as in the day. Work must be suspended wholly, or prosecuted partially under great disadvantages. Sleep comes with inactivity. Flowers fold up their petals or droop in the night-drip.

Birds hush their songs and cover their young; and those that wake are exceptional, like the nightingale, "most musical, most melancholy;" and the whip-poor-will, most melancholy, most unmusical; or are stupid birds, like owls; or foul, like bat-birds of evil omen. Even wild beasts rest in their lair, except, perhaps, the sneaking fox or prowling jackal, whom hunger drives through the darkness to its prey. The innocent and good are asleep.

The bad are awake—the thief, the burglar, the adulterer, the murderer, and she whose "feet go down to death," whose "steps take hold on hell." The boy-baby sleeps in the cradle, the young scapegrace is in the midst of his revels. Men separate. They have crowded the streets and the markets during the day, the markets and streets are deserted at night. The commingled battalions of hostile armies draw off to their several camps, for "the bugle sounds truce" when the night-clouds once lower.

All things seem exaggerated in the sad light of the stars. In the gloaming of evening, and in the gloom of night, natural objects take on mystical shapes and suggest preternatural fancies of the grotesque or horrible.

Night is the time to weep. Griefs that are kept

in abeyance by business or social duties, find vent in sighs and groans and tears. David weeps for his fallen Absalom, Eli mourns over his dissolute sons. The wife, who has been all day pale because of the sin of her husband, sits in the flush of her sorrow, because she now ceases to control her countenance when none can see her weep, and make her tears a fresh disgrace to the man she loves. The merchant on the eve of bankruptcy, who has been so cheery all day, that none might discover his plight, now walks the apartments of his mansion, creeps in to gaze upon his children happy in their sleep, and then goes to wring his hands in bitter anticipation of the crush of his fortunes, and the change in the circumstances of his children which may come with the morrow. Unrequited love looks at the cold stars, cries, and has no response, weeps and has no soother. The sinner, smitten with a sense of his guilt, cowers in the darkness, wets his pillow with his tears, fills the shades of night with frightful images of retribution, and fears to sleep, lest he wake in the hell of an everlasting night. Even physical pain intensifies in the darkness. O, how long the night lengthens! All sufferers "long for the morning."

"O, the waiting in the watches of the night!

In the darkness, desolation, and contrition, and affright;

The awful hush that holds us shut away from all delight;
The ever weary fancy that forever weary goes
Recounting ever over every aching loss it knows—
The ever weary eyelids gasping ever for repose—
In the dreary, weary watches of the night."

How longing for the morning becomes in all climes the representation of the most intense desire of the soul. And thus night represents ignorance, inaction, separation, sorrow, death.

We know the one cause of all these things: We have been turned away from the sun. Our conditions of light, heat, and electricity have changed, and these three are the promoters of life and growth, of health and activity, of strength and beauty.

How striking a representation is this of the dark side of man's spiritual experience! The night of the soul! How desolate and dreary it is! In the first place, the soul is suffering the absence of light. Darkness lies on all the realm of thought. Artificial lights are employed, but nothing can be seen naturally in light that is not from the sun, for God created all things to be seen in sunlight. Hence comes all the confusion of thought that belongs to an unregenerate man. He thinks he sees; he does not see; but nothing is in the right light; there is a mist and gloom, an inaccuracy and exaggeration,

a disturbance of shades because of the absence of the light which belongs to him. He sees by the cold light of stars, but they are the suns of other systems, not his. They are unhelpful, and indeed aggravating. When the light of the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus who is the Sun of Righteousness, fails to fall on any soul, how can he see God and man and sin and duty—or any other thing—in a right light?

All the emotional nature goes wrong or grows cold, and becomes torpid when the light is gone. Men and women love, but love neither wisely or well. Good angels go away. Bad passions come. It is night. The hyena, the bat, the owl-birds that defile and beasts that rave, are swinging or raging through the heart. All forms of selfishness revel under the cover of the darkness.

The will grows sleepy in the gloom. The electrifying influence of the Holy Ghost is withheld. The sensitive soul has been benumbed. There is still life. The man is alive to grief. He feels that something is absent, the presence of which is desirable.

The trouble of the unregenerate heart is that it is turned away from the Sun of the Soul, Jesus Christ, the center of the system of the universe.

So long as it is night, weeping will endure; and night will last until we turn ourselves to the sun.

With night, day stands in such splendid contrast! There comes a twilight after the deep darkness. There was a twilight in the evening which broadened into thickest gloom, but this twilight broadens into greater light. As one watches the horizon at the east, one sees first the faintest insinuation of light, a modest look into the face of the darkness, which is quickly withdrawn, and then repeated, and again and again, growing bolder, until the little ray holds its place, and another comes to keep it company; and day is approaching; and the stars that were so bold in the darkness begin to pale; as the day comes on they sink deep up into the skies out of our sight, and night is pushed further and further westward, retreating before the conquering day, now flaming up and touching every cloud and mist and mountain-top and steeple and window-pane with fresh glory, until all the landscape is aglow, and nature wipes the dewy tears of darkness from her eyes.

With the sun comes not only light, but heat and electricity as well. These three are full of life. Everywhere there is animation. The birds have felt prophetic thrills of the coming of the morning,

and the lark has gone up to his observatory in the high air to look out for the coming brightness. Domestic animals revive. The horse neighs in his stable, the sheep bleats in its field, for the voice of chanticleer has roused them. Men go forth to their work. The team is driven afield. The band is put on the wheel of the factory, and the hum begins in the workshops of the artisans and market-place of the traders. Love gives its morning kiss; parents and children salute. Men rush out to business, and children to play. The streets are thronged.

Life has come back with light. All the innocent, the good, the gifted, the active souls are at work. The owl has shut down his huge eyes, the bat folded its leathern wings, the snake lies still in the sunlight, the wild beasts retreat from the sounds of humanity. The police-eye of the sun has sent thief and robber and burglar and murderer away from their destructive work. Men collect for consultation and co-operation. The face of a man sharpeneth the face of his fellow-men. A glowing magnetism is generated. To earnest thought and anxious business and panting pleasure the hours seem too short. Even the sufferer is relieved. As he lies on his cot in the hospital he ceases to be annoyed by the ticking of the clock, which had seemed

all night to be a mechanical contrivance for lengthening the hours. The light is let into the chamber, new warmth, new electric influences. Friends come and go. There are voices in the street, in the hall, by the bedside. Even in his bitter pain he is helped by the grasp of a friendly hand or the glance of a friendly eye. The hours are shortened. All brains, all hearts, all hands are at work. Humanity is advanced, and civilization makes progress. For weeping we have the night, for joy we have the day.

We know the cause of all the delightful phenomena which succeed the doleful night; we have been turned to the sun. In this we have a striking representation of the bright side of man's spiritual experience! The day of the soul, how bright, how joyful it is! Light has come back. Things are seen as they really are. The eyes of the mind are not subjected to the torture or to the unperceived injuriousness of artificial lights. Confusions disappear. A man sees things in a right light, unexaggerated. Superstitions and fears and images of grotesque distortions are all scattered. His heart grows better, calmer, warmer, purer, stronger.

The good heat is doing its work. It is not the enervating heat of the furnace, but the always

healthful heat of the sun. He grows inwardly wholesome. Bad spirits flee away. Good angels and sweet loves come back into his heart. The bats and hyenas of suspicion, hate, and revenge are driven forth. Hisses as of serpents are no more heard, but the voice of the turtle-dove is cooing in his spirit.

His will receives a tonic. The electric influence of the Holy Ghost is on his soul. His will girds up itself. He may not have been able to study the causes of this great change, but he is joyfully conscious of them. Recently our scientific men have made great discoveries for the sanitary influence of sunlight. Some physicians give their patients sunbaths, submitting the person to the direct rays of the sun. This is said to produce some of the results which are supposed to be caused by taking iron, being, however, a better tonic. Here again modern science is corroborating the songs of the old inspired poets. The Sun of Righteousness is the health of the countenance of those who live in His light. The regenerated man has joy because he has been turned to the Sun of the Soul, Jesus Christ, the center of the system of the universe. So long as it is day we have the joy of the day; and day will last until we turn ourselves away from the Sun.

Another lesson of importance is that God's works go forward in the order of—first night, then morning. In the earliest recorded syllables of time we have the original chronological statement of Moses: "And the evening and the morning were the first day." It was first darkness, then light. The day did not begin with brightness, but with gloom. The processions of history have walked in that way ever since, and God's mighty doings have been wrought in that type. It is interesting to trace it in every department of nature and of humanity. It seems to have been one of the deepest and most pervading ideas in the Infinite Mind. Where the lofty mountain now stands in grandeur was original silent darkness of nothingness. Then chaos surged tumultuously in the disorderly rout of things that had been created by God. The ponderous mass was a ponderous mess. Through the emptiness, shapeless matter rolled and fell, and rose, and jerked and slid, unguided by the wisdom of law, unheld by the hand of gravitation, confusion smiting confusion until whatever was, was utterly confounded. There was no creature to see and suffer.

So in the darkness there went forward what can not possibly be described in human words, because

law was long before speech, and every word has reference to law. We can only approach the idea by pulling pin after pin out of the splendid tabernacle of the universe, and letting it fall in ruinous decay. But "fall" and "ruinous" and "decay" have reference to law. The vast oppositeness of the original to the present state of affairs is begun to be perceived by noticing how all our thoughts and expressions go on in obedience to law. On chaos law fell, and through chaos law thrilled, the first symptom of life. Creation was born in the evening. The first swing of the pendulum of the clock of time marked the first instant of the evening. "The evening and the morning were the first day."

The Bible follows nature on this same type. Its day begins in the darkness of the original state of the universe, and emerges in the cosmos of an orderly physical, intellectual, and moral world. It begins in the evening of the history of humanity, its dim infancy and youth, and emerges in the glory of the redeemed spirit. It begins with man groping through the byways of earth, and ends with a man walking in the open golden streets of the New Jerusalem. It begins with the evening of Adam, and ends with the morning of Jesus.

The same law holds good in the case of each in-

dividual man. His earliest beginnings in embryo are in darkness and the peril thereof. How long that evening seems when we attentively regard it! Months, and no senses; then senses, and months before any child can use them. Intellect lies like a landscape in the night. Then the dawnings of intelligence show mind more and more. Sometimes no morning comes, and then all the human life is an evening, but there is no complete day.

The same holds true in each department of human exertion. Men usually begin life poor. It is exceptional when men's childhood and youth are their happiest time. The struggle for existence goes forward. The skill to win the bread has first to be acquired, and then exerted, before the joy of the bread comes. It is quite unnatural when the morning precedes the evening, and men have every luxury and brightness in youth, and every privation and gloom in old age. The earliest years are the darkest. Comfort and competence should follow in the later years. It will cheer many a dark hour to remember that the day follows the night. It is often darkest just before the dawn.

All our inventions have followed that principle. When we had no tools men shaped the crooked stick to make a plow, and in their own bodies found

models of the needed implements. All our modern machinery has been the developed conveniences for our necessary work. The day follows the night in mechanics.

The morning will come in all God's universe. Divine prophets of the day and joy are on every hand. God has not left Himself without a thousand witnesses of His purpose to bring the day and all its represents to this world. Weeping may lodge with us for a night, but joy comes shouting and singing with the gray dawn. Joy is the rightful tenant. Sorrow is not the proprietor of life.

That blessed Gospel of joy is given all men for their help. Those who suffer in toil, the mechanic, the farmer, the seamstress, the sufferer, the merchant with his many cares, for all who sit in darkness and weep over the disappointments of life, this word of comfort and strength is given. The morning is coming and with the day will be joy. The morning climbing the steeps of the day is here! Eyes are opened! Pain is soothed! The clouds float away! The stars are lost in the daylight! New meanings are given all things! The new day wherein dwelleth righteousness is here. The light of it shall never go out in darkness and cruelty. It is the beginning of God's glorious day.

Brothers, shall we join the joyous thronging troops of the day? Shall we not march with those singing with the voice of a great multitude, as the voice of many waters and the voice of the mighty chorus in training for the Hallelujah Chorus? There will yet be the shout, "Alleluiah, the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth!" We are preparing for that song. Weeping shall fly away. Tears shall be wiped from all eyes. The morning of life, with troops of joy, is breaking upon us.

VI.

THE MIGHTY APPEAL OF USEFULNESS.

"Come thou with us, and we will do thee good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel. . . . Leave us not, I pray thee; forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou mayest be to us instead of eyes."—NUM. X, 29, 31.

ISRAEL was now at the edge of the desert, beyond which future wanderings would be full of difficulty. They would be beset on either hand with dangerous foes. The rocks and defiles afforded the lurking-place of their enemies. Though Moses was bright with the confidence of faith, he appeals to Hobab, his kinsman, to share the great reward that the Promised Land held for the enslaved nation. He asks him to cast his lot with them, and plainly offers the reward in his personal good as an inducement. There were great promises of a land so rich and abundant as to be described as the "land of milk and honey," held before Israel. Moses

commanded the resources that would enable him to fulfill his promise to Hobab, "We will do thee good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." But Hobab refused. It is probable that he did not doubt God, who had led the enslaved nation out of their bondage, and had delivered them at the Red Sea from pursuing taskmasters. Neither did he doubt the future of Israel as to the fulfillment of the covenant promise God had made to them. But he knew the present condition of that nation, disobedient, rebellious, and unwilling to be led. The children of Israel daily vexed Moses, and destroyed themselves. Fellowship with them was not attractive to this bold wanderer of the desert. His own interest seemed to him satisfying. He was not ready for a new venture. He did not especially desire the "good" that Moses and Israel were seeking. He was quite content with the freedom the wilderness offered him. With his own camp, his herdsmen, and flocks, he preferred to care for himself, and to enjoy the resources of the country already familiar to him. Therefore he answered, "I will not go, but I will depart to mine own land and kindred." The prospect of his personal enrichment and blessing did not interest him.

But Moses, the great leader had a second plea

more powerful to such a man than the appeal of personal gain. The second appeal was for Israel's sake. Hobab knew the country; he could be eyes for a wandering nation seeking paths through the wilderness to the Land of Promise. He could be a guide for these pilgrims. His knowledge of the resources of the land might be useful to them in their necessities. His influence with the native tribes would help if he turned it to Israel's cause. Therefore, Moses' appeal was to Hobab's heart and his heroic spirit rather than his temporal interest: "Leave us not I pray thee; forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou mayest be to us instead of eyes." The record does not tell us that he refused this second appeal. The silence of the Book may indicate that he accepted the commission of usefulness to Israel. Henceforth he journeys with them, he counsels with Moses and the leaders of the people, he directs their defenses against their enemies, he casts his lot with them. So Hobab and Moses continue in the leadership.

This twofold appeal is the great argument which the Church must make to-day. We shall be true to God's commission given to the good and strong, when we apply it to those of this generation who

are so able to help in establishing the great kingdom of God on the earth. Let us study the two kinds of invitation.

"Come, and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." That appeal is always proper for the Christian Church to give, and equally proper for the individual to accept. The Church may say with full emphasis and earnest pleading, "Come, and we will do thee good." The Church has Divine promises, the fulfillment of which brings the inflow of special blessings. The privilege of holy fellowship and the sharing of the greatest good are afforded Christian disciples. The world, with its sin and sorrow, is invited to share the Heavenly Father's goodness. The Gospel calls men to pardon, peace, and manifold riches in Christ Jesus, our Lord. The Church is established in the world to point the way of pardon, love, and joy to needy men. It must never lose its right to say, "Come, and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning us." The evangel of Christ is the best word this world has ever heard, and if the Church shall fail to repeat the blessed invitation, "Come," to all men, she will vacate her greatest privilege in serving humanity. What would you say to a hungry child whom you

found crying for bread on the street on a winter's night? Would not your reason as well as your sentiment persuade you that the most immediate service would be to supply food? If you found a boy growing up in ignorance and the vice of the community in which he lived, would not the first service rendered be to remove him from the perils of ignorance and crime? If in the burning building you saw, with pathetic appeal, some form appear at an upper window, would not the first great duty of the fire department be to rescue the imperiled life? The instinct of self-preservation is implanted in every heart. To save men is a Divine commission. To reach out helping hands to those who are in despair is the work of God as manifestly as the education of childhood and youth. The appeal must be made, and God's people must continue to emphasize the invitations of the Gospel. The Bible is full of appeals like this made by Moses to Hobab. It has its "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." Its most familiar picture of the Gospel is the Savior of men, with outstretched hands of invitation, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Its prophets, singers, kings, priests, Christ Himself and His disciples, all had the great word, "Come," at

the heart of their message. The new evangelism, like the evangelism of all ages, will be a message of salvation for the sinful and wayward children of men. To declare that "Christ died for all men," as the Lincolnshire Methodist woman did to Tennyson, is indeed "old news, good news, and new news." The Christian Church must never forget that commission. The world will always need some voice to cry "Come," and some finger must always point to the crucified Redeemer. The blessed invitation of the Gospel must always ring out. May the altars of the Church never lose the glory of helping lost men and women to the Divine Savior!

And yet, if that were the only invitation that the Church has to give the world, we might be uneasy. The motive of self-interest can not long be followed without leading to selfishness. Selfishness is the heart of sin. If the community had nothing better for a starving child than a loaf of bread, it would pauperize him. The community provides schools, instruction in morals and religion. The hungry outcast crying on a winter's night must have more than the immediate satisfaction of an appetite. Self-interest must be supplemented by a higher interest. The appeal must not simply be made, "Come, and we will do thee good," but the

supplemental appeal will give meaning to the earnest persuasion given in the Evangel, "Come and be saved," in order to help "save others." We are invited to bear the cross, not only for the crown that may encircle our own brow, but for the crown that may be possible for others.

The Christian Church is not in the world solely for salvage, rescuing the flotsam and jetsam, and saving human wreckage on the sea of life. It must always be the glory of the faith that it has sympathy and power to save broken, battered lives along life's way; but it must do more than saving men. It must save men for service. Its Gospel includes the declaration that we are "fellow-workers together with God." Its summons is a call to great work, its devotion to God is to be seen in its devotion to God's children. God has revealed no necessity in Himself which we may supply. He has linked Himself with His poor and tempted children; so that the Church of to-day has for every strong and capable soul the old message of Moses to Hobab, "Thou mayest be to us instead of eyes."

Think of the Church's task in winning a world from self to God! To persuade men that right is nobler than weakly yielding to wrong, to inspire great souls with the desire to help rather than be

helped, is her mission. To bring light in the midst of the great darkness is her responsibility. The Church is anointed to preach the Gospel to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, to bring deliverance to the captives, the recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bound. That was the vision that glowed before the eyes of the Redeemer of the world that day in the synagogue when He expounded the words that were read in their hearing. He announced the fulfillment of the old prophetic vision in Himself. What a warfare against evil the kingdom of righteousness must wage! Evil is intrenched in high places as well as in the low. Against wrong in the individual, the commercial and social life, is a relentless and life-long struggle. Can any heroic soul sit in ease and refuse the call to a great service in a contest so bitterly waged? Though you may know nothing of the passion of the saints to follow a holy life, what is the appeal for service the world's Redeemer makes to your heart? If you do not find in the Gospels the wondrous story of love's redemption wrought out in the high philosophy of heaven, does there not come a mighty appeal, as you see Jesus Christ going to the world's redemption bearing His cross, suffering and dying to deliver sinful men

from their bondage? Do not the Gospels call to every equipped life to come to the help of the Lord against the mighty?

What more glorious use can be made of knowledge, influence, and personal strength than to turn them to the help of the needy? If your vision is penetrating and clear, what nobler service can you render than to "be eyes" for those who may not see afar? If your hand has strength and cunning, to what better use may it be turned than lifting the burdens of the weak and teaching the unskillful how best to accomplish their task? If you have wealth, you have possession of a power for good which is nearly omnipotent, if rightly applied. What more worthy aim can lead men and women of wealth than that through their help the poor may catch visions of the highest and holiest life? If we have the gift of prophecy, we must use it for the instruction of the ignorant, if we retain it. To hesitate is ingloriously to fail; selfishly to keep for ourselves what God has intended shall serve His children, is to lose life with all its opportunities of good. Hobab's knowledge and influence never were more precious to him than when, having refused the appeal to enrich himself, he accepted the opportunity to assist others. As the new dangers arose, and he

helped Moses meet them and conquer them, his own mind and soul grew imperial. By the number, magnitude, and stress of the responsibilities which he accepted in his service of others, he was developed into his own worthiest life. When Garibaldi was defeated at Rome he issued his immortal appeal: "Soldiers, I am without money and without reward. I have nothing to offer you but cold and hunger, and rags and hardship. Let him who loves his country follow me." But with that summons to self-denial and patriotism he gathered to his side the choicest souls of his generation. The men who followed Garibaldi in response to that appeal became courageous heroes themselves. When our Lord turned and said to the multitude, "The Son of man hath not where to lay His head," and invited them to follow Him, He was calling to men and women who had counted the cost, and were ready to surrender themselves to the cause of purity, truth, and human helpfulness. The way of life is narrow; the gate to it is narrow; but the narrowness of the way and the gate are its glory. Narrowness of the way demands energy, high purpose, and noble perseverance. There is no other way of success in life but the narrow way. To invite a great soul to a broad path is to invite him to smallness, to the cessation of

growth, and impotence. The cry has been heard in every age, "Would God it were easier to be good!" "And would God it would be easier to redeem the earth!" But that is a mistaken cry. When the ten spies returned from Canaan murmuring because of the obstacles to their conquest, their murmuring was an evidence of weakness of character; but the cry of Caleb and Joshua was, "Up, let us conquer these giants, and take their walled cities." That was the token of the greatness of the two. Jesus Christ did not come primarily to change the circumstances that should make life easy, but to give a new incentive and lofty inspiration that would enable men to meet life's circumstances as they are. He never promised His friends that the path of duty should be free from danger. In the spirit of the Spartan mother who charged her soldier son, "Come home with your shield or on it," Christ says to all His disciples, "Take the field and save humanity, cost what it may." It is always true that the choice of the broad path of personal ease and comfort, instead of the narrow path of duty, leads to the loss of self-respect, the world's esteem, and true success. Sir Henry Stanley describes bravery as a requisite for those who push into the African forest, and says: "The bigger the work the greater

the joy in doing it. The whole-hearted striving and wrestling with difficulty to lay hold with a firm grip and level head, and the calm resolution of the monster, and tugging and toiling and wrestling at it to-day, to-morrow, and the next, until it is done,—is the soldier's creed of forward, ever forward; it is the man's faith that for this task he was born." When McKay wrote from Uganda in Africa to the home Church, he said, "For our work at this station we want the best men in England; not a man who can be easily spared, but the man who can not be spared." Christianity from the beginning has grown upon tasks that were so great as to require the consecration of all its power. "O, pray not for easy lives, pray to be stronger men; do not pray for tasks equal to your power, pray for power equal to your tasks; then the doing of your work shall be no miracle, but you shall be a miracle; every day you shall wonder at yourself, at the richness of the life which has come to you by the grace of God."

VII.

RE-ENLISTED STRENGTH.

"But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper-tree; and he requested for himself that he might die."—I KINGS XIX, 4.

ONLY yesterday Elijah was the hero of a great victory over a false religion, its priests, the king and queen. On Carmel he waited through the fruitless attempts of the priests of Baal to meet the fire-test, and calmly called upon the Lord God, whom he served. His God answered by fire, and a nation was swept from idolatry to faith in the true God. He stood one man as against four hundred priests of Baal. Elijah plus his God vanquished the four hundred and their god. Yesterday Elijah was invincible. The heroic and dauntless spirit of a man with sublime faith in his God registered a great conquest. The people had proclaimed, "The Lord, He is the God." The false prophets had been slain. Rain came to the parched land. "And the hand of the Lord was on Elijah."

But to-day Elijah is in the wilderness. An eclipse has darkened his sun. He is not heroic to-day. He is a coward flying from the threats of an infuriated queen. No royal triumph is accorded the prophet of God as he hastens to the wilderness. He takes his place by the side of Moses, who comes down from face-to-face conference with Jehovah, to yield to wrath which shut the gates of the Promised Land against him. Samson, after a great victory in which he had smitten a thousand men, faints from thirst, and complains of his wretchedness. The mighty man is weak like other men when he is shorn of his strength. Jonah, after a day of most successful preaching in Nineveh, is in despair because of his success in turning a wicked people to repentance. Richelieu, the craftiest statesman of Europe, had a series of brilliant diplomatic victories. He was courted by all rulers. But what a mournful contrast is in his miserable loneliness! "If I had served my God as well as my king, He would not have deserted me," The "Little Emperor," whose cruel ambition had swept Europe with war and carnage is pictured standing on lonely St. Helena, scanning the sea towards France. No more pathetic picture can be seen. Once feared by all, at last he is the prisoner of all nations. Elijah

is in dejection because he learned the threat of Jezebel, and fast made his way to the desert, and threw himself under the stunted tree, and prayed for the relief of death. Yet Elijah is one of God's chosen men. He is the best representative of the true God in a degenerate land. He must not be ranked among the ordinary men. To read his history reveals that he was a conqueror. He moves among men with the spirit of one who fully appreciates the meaning of his name, "Jehovah is my God." He is an intense soul, with high daring and courage; he compels the king to listen to his burning words as he denounces his foul transgressions. In the time of famine he dares trust God for his food, and the ravens are commissioned as his butlers. Evening and morning, bread and flesh are brought to him. He is the greatest miracle-worker of the prophetic age. He bends over the dead form of the son of the widow, and calls him back to life. And yet this man, who dared taunt the prophets of Baal and bid the multitude decide between God and Baal, is himself a coward. Dean Stanley says that Elijah is "the grandest and most romantic character that Israel ever produced." But the grandest and most romantic characters are oftentimes weakest. Those who can walk in the clouds stumble in the clods.

Even the loftiest spirits seem most helpless in certain testings of life.

What is true in history we have proved true in our own hearts. After the most gorgeous spectacles of human triumph, we easily descend to the commonplace. The moments of poetic fancy are followed by the dullest prose. The brilliant success of the drawing-room is overbalanced by the reaction of the succeeding days. Even the loftiest spiritual delight is often followed with depression and despondency.

It is a great distance from Mount Carmel to the wilderness, but one can soon cover it. Elijah was one day's journey from home. He was only eighty miles from Jezreel where Jezebel lived, but he is in the wilderness; he goes quickly from the royal court to the desert. No flowers bloom in the wilderness; there are no trees with grateful shade. The stunted broom-trees are the junipers, under which the great and romantic Elijah waits in dejection. How are the mighty fallen! Hercules has failed in his labors! Atlas has lost the world from his shoulder!

How did Elijah get to the wilderness? Did royal chariots convey him? Did priestly escort bring him to this place? Who could drive the con-

quering prophet of yesterday into the wilderness of to-day? No one but Elijah himself. "But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness." There was no power in the royal army to bring him; no necessity could compel him; he went of his own accord. The wilderness suited the condition of his soul; he preferred to go to the wilderness because his soul was in the wilderness. He was in sympathy with what the wilderness represented in life. He had lost his life's purpose; he had no consuming sense of duty, and, therefore, was an outcast. On Mount Carmel, in the presence of royalty and the prophets of Baal, his thought was concerning God and his duty to Him. In the wilderness he thinks of himself and safety. The message of Jezebel frightened him, and he fled. "He arose and went for his life." The marvelous change from Carmel to the wilderness came with a change of purpose; his mind and soul were transformed, and he fled as a coward, because he thought more of himself than of his God. The greatest difference between Carmel and the wilderness was in the mental and spiritual religions of Elijah. Let any one abandon duty, forget God, or give Him a secondary place in life, and he will quickly go from Carmel to the wilderness.

There can be no question but that the prophet was weary. The physical reaction from the great tests of the preceding day would easily bring him to despondency. But, back of all these elements in his experience, was the changed relation to God and duty; his vision of the Highest was blurred; the master purpose that made him heroic had fled; self had become the most important consideration of his life; he is, therefore, like the ordinary man. So long as one follows a well-defined conviction of duty, there will be no place for the wilderness experience. Juniper-trees do not grow by the side of the path of noble purpose, but personality first, and despondency is sure to follow. Think of self, and one is unfitted for any great duty. The surgeon who has the difficult operation to perform, requiring all the nerve and steadiness he can command for his success, must think of the patient rather than himself. The saving of life displaces the thought of his personal comfort. Let the artist permit necessity to drive him to painting canvas by the yard, and he is at once in the wilderness of his art. Only the man who is in love with his art, for art's sake, can be the true artist. Even the master poets who have attempted to compel their Muse to inspire them to some unworthy subject, have

written only jingles which show how a lofty purpose can yield to the narrowness of selfishness. Selfishness is the giant who wrestles with our best natures. If he can overthrow our vision of God and duty, we at once are like Samson bound for derision and the amusement of his enemies. The prophets and men of God in every age who have been successful have kept themselves behind their work. Some great guiding purpose has called them into service, and glorified all their work. Whenever they have failed to see duty, the inevitable result came to them. They were like Elijah in the wilderness praying for the relief of death. No good man is ever led under the juniper of discouragement, except through a reversal of the order that God has intended for him.

But there is a second valuable lesson in this wilderness experience. What is God's treatment of a discouraged man? Like God's methods wherever revealed, it will fully justify our studies. When we see our friends in discouragement we laugh at them; we try to drive them by ridicule to some heroic endeavor; we drag them into society, and in its dizzy whirl expect them to forget their disappointment and bereavement. If we fail in this, we poise the barbed arrow, shoot the shaft of contempt

at the heart, and then wonder that we have never noticed how cowardly our friend was. "Man's inhumanity to man." We say, let the discouraged prophet have his prayer granted; let him die under that juniper-tree. One who is so despondent as this Elijah will never be a joy-maker for the world. We can not afford to waste effort upon a despondent soul. But God's quiver is full of mercy. He watches the discouraged man, and grants a better answer to his prayer than he could think or ask. God claims him as His child, even if he is discouraged. The rough mantle that covers the saddened face can not hide Elijah from the eyes of God. The Infinite Father said, "His extremity is My opportunity." Elijah had never seen an angel. The swift-winged messengers of God hastened to the relief of the discouraged man under the juniper-tree. This dark and gloomy day is the opportunity for the prophet to see an angel. It is the day of the revelation of love; from heaven the angelic hosts are sent to relieve, refresh, and re-enlist the disheartened prophet. God saw the opportunity to arouse Elijah from despair to heroic service, and, therefore, He prefers to bring him from the wilderness. The prayer was denied, but the Divine mercy granted a better answer.

What does God do in this emergency? He first relieves us from bodily weariness; tired nature needs time to rally its strength. Even an exhausted prophet can not do much work, and God said: "Let him rest, sing him to sleep. Let slumber smooth out the wrinkles in his brow, the cramp of the limb will disappear after he is rested. He cannot eat now, let him slumber."

How little this weary world of ours has thanked God for the blessings of sleep! How seldom do we appreciate that, with each night, He gives us the possibility of slumber and refreshment! O, give thanks to Him for the contrast between the city, wearied on Saturday night with the week's work, discouraged with life's burden, with head throbbing with aches from too close application to work, hands burning with blisters and heart despondent because of unrequited labor, and the vigor and freshness of the morning of the Lord's-day! Somewhere between work and worship, between earth and heaven, sleep put her soft arms around the tired body, and the head stopped aching, muscles were rested, and the heart grew hopeful. O, blessed rest that makes life tolerable! Sleep is better than death.

"Of all the thoughts of God that are
Borne inward unto souls afar,

Along the Psalmist's music deep,
Now, tell me if there any is
For gift or grace surpassing this,
'He giveth His beloved sleep?' "

But he will awaken. What, then, shall be done to the discouraged man? "Refresh him." Elijah was accustomed to the plain food that the ravens brought in the days of famine; but now God will surprise him with a rich meal. "Behold, then an Angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat." "And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again, and the Angel of the Lord came again a second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat." It is a great change from ravens to angels as butlers; but it is God's way of bringing new life to his wearied and discouraged prophet.

There is an old picture in one of the galleries of Europe called the "Monks' Kitchen." It represents the monks seated at an empty table, and all the work is being done by angels. One stands by the range, raking the coals, another scrubs the floor, and still another is preparing food for the cooking. It is a quaint old picture, but it is intended to symbolize God's great care of His servants. There is more truth about its suggestion than appears at first glance. God is not belittled by the thought that He cares for the details of life. To some of us, God must reveal himself in the little

things, for we never know the great ministries. We lose much of the help of the Divine presence when we limit Him to the sublimities. If God could stop and feed the lions lest they rend Daniel asunder; if he could open the doors of the prisons and release His servant; if our blessed Lord would cater to the hunger of a great multitude that came to hear him in the wilderness,—it is not irreverent for us to believe that the Heavenly Father is interested in nourishing our bodies against the journey that is before us. We may with great literalness take the declaration of David, “Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies, Thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over.” What a banquet God spread before Elijah that day in the wilderness!

But the refreshed prophet must be re-enlisted. The relations that brought Elijah to the wilderness must be changed. Recovered strength and spirit are given for new duties. New purposes must take the place of the aimlessness. Self must come after God, work must occupy the place of fear. To remain under the juniper-tree in the wilderness, when one has strength for the journey, is a waste of power. The partial recovery from the discouragement must be completed by being set to some worthy task. Nothing will so rouse to noble action

as a call to work. God means that Elijah shall continue in the journey, but not in the wilderness. For the man who prayed that he might be permitted to die, that journey was too great; he must have a companion for the long walk, and, therefore, God, whom he had neglected, promised to walk with him. No journey can be too great in such company. The same assurance given Moses was Elijah's, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." The journey may be long and difficult. The battle may be sharply contested. But if God is with His servant, the destination will surely be reached. It is never an uncertain battle in which God is allied with one of the contestants.

The record adds significantly, "And he went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb, the mount of God." The prophet goes out of that wilderness, keeping step with his God. He was girded anew with strength. The long journey was fitted to the spirit of the man of God. No longer do we see him with mantle-covered face asking for the release of death. He is alert and swift because his life swung back to its right relation to God. The new tasks summoned him. His mission was to be accomplished before his prayer to die could be answered. He must

climb mountains, and learn perfectly the great lesson of his life-work. He is to be the maker of kings; he must establish a system of instruction for the sons of the prophets; a nation is to be taught the fundamental lessons of God's kingdom before Elijah can place his mantle upon another. And when this re-enlisted servant of God ceased his work, death did not put chill touch upon him. The chariot of God carried him away from his pupil and his work. "Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." Death can never harm the life that thus is yielded to God. Death never can break the companionship when God walks with His servant. Re-enlisted for a great work, he cheerily obeys God, and wins heaven by a chariot of fire.

The story of Elijah is a parable of life. God waits to refresh, comfort, and re-enlist us in His service. None of us need remain in that wilderness of despair. God bids us take up our work for Him. We must bravely carry the responsibility He places on us. He will "be with us always, even unto the end." We can be assured of a successful work, and an abundant entrance into the kingdom of glory.

"I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air:
I only know I can not drift
Beyond His love and care."

VIII.

THE COMPLETE LIFE.

"But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."—I COR. I, 30.

IN the Valtican gallery there is a piece of sculpture called the Torso Belvedere. It is a broken fragment of what once represented Hercules in repose. But now the head is gone, the arms are gone, and the limbs are gone. It does not seem at first to be much of a work of art. But Angelo called himself the pupil of that torso. He discovered in it the greatest monument of art. When darkness shut out the light and beauty of the world from his blinded eyes, he used to be led to that torso, and, passing his hands over it in rapt admiration, declared that human skill had wrought no finer work. If a partial study of the Belvedere warranted the great artist in his high appreciation, what rapture would have filled his soul had he been privileged to study that marble complete!

We are permitted to stand in God's great gallery and study the perfect example of life in Christ Jesus. In His completeness we shall not be able to apprehend Him. In all His fullness we shall know Him when the limitations of this life shall have been removed. But there are visions of Him within our privilege now, that will complete the best endeavors of all who strive for the perfect life.

We may study how humanity created anew in Christ Jesus is enabled by virtue of His incarnation to reach wisdom, not by means of human research alone, but by revelation. Man is possessed by righteousness; not by works done in obedience to the law, but by the infusion of the spirit of righteousness in Christ. Sanctification is accomplished, not by human merit, but by the Divine law of growth in the principle of holiness. The redemption of humanity from the captivity of sin is accomplished in the atonement for our sins. The great work of life is completed in Christ. The glory for it must be given the Lord, and not the unaided efforts of men.

You remember one of the definitions of your earlier geometry to be, "the complement of an angle is the measure of the difference between it and a right angle." The same principle will give us the

definite statement of this study. The measure of the difference between our utmost endeavors and the "Completed Life" is its complement. Christ Jesus is at once revealed as the Perfect Life and the complement of our best efforts. The foolish and vain attempts of the wise, scribes, and disputers is described in the context. God brought to failure the wisdom of men, but with supreme satisfaction reveals His Son to fill up the measure of life in its noblest search.

It was in the time of war that a father who had been home on a furlough was starting back to his comrades on the battlefield. He bade good-bye to wife and child, and went out to a soldier's duty. The child tried to follow the father, who had gone out of the door. But the little hand could not reach the latch. He stood upon tiptoe, but failed to open the door. The desire was intense as the child's heart could know. The effort was honestly made, but failed. The nurse put her hand upon the lock, which the child's arm was too short to reach. Her arm was the complement of his short arm. She filled up what was lacking of the child's upreach to open that door. Before the door, leading to divine privilege, humanity has stood, intent upon opening it, and entering the heritage of the children of

God. Upon tiptoe, with its longest outreach, it has failed through the centuries to unlatch the door and enter. But the human race plus Christ has accomplished what the race minus Christ never could have done. To know the power of that plus factor is the study of this text.

The Strasburg Cathedral has a clock which represents the order of the solar system. The position of the planets, in relation to one another and to the sun, is indicated; and the hours repeat the goings and register the doings of this great section of the heavens. But high over the clock and its solar arrangement appear Christ and His apostles. The hours show the apostles revolving around their Master. There is the hint that the Divine man is above all things, and that the order and movement of the physical universe have their full meaning only in the light of human history. They declare that nature is for humanity, and that humanity comes to its complete sense of itself only in Christianity. This is the symbol for to-day. It is the mood to which Christianity makes with new hope its ancient appeal.

History has recorded four great aspirations of humanity, specially marked in the development of several of the greatest nations of the past. The

place in history of a race is measured by the expression of need, and finding satisfaction in some permanent quality of humanity. The largest contribution any nation or individual makes to highest life is in voicing the demands for these elements of noble life, and opening the spring of satisfaction for them. The attempts to secure the simple life by ignoring the great catholic demands of the mind and soul have been miserable failures. Whether at the Brook Farm or in the wilds of the desert, men have tried to deny the privilege of satisfaction to the truest aspirations of mankind, the experiment has been a sad failure.

One of the charges against a Christian civilization has been that, instead of reducing the wants of men, it has seemed to increase them. We must accept the statement of fact. The desires of men have been multiplied. Comfortable existence is not the end of life. Comfort may be the badge of degradation. There is a species of jelly-fish which never stirs from the rock where it is fixed. It does not go in search of food, because it feeds upon a seaweed which floats to it. That would seem to be a most comfortable kind of life. But scientists inform us that it is the lowest form of life. The law is that as life rises in the scale, the necessities are

multiplied. The nobler animals require more supplies and from a wider range than the lower. It is possible for a human being to live and die without intellectual curiosity being stirred, but that would be existence rather than living. What sensitive soul would surrender the life which trembles with the enterprise of knowledge for that? A savage has but few wants. He prepares easily for a journey and war. His kit is simple as compared with the trunks of supplies carried by a civilized man. Mr. Stanley tells of the rude life in an African kraal, which, compared with the complex life of our cities, would astound the simple natives of the Dark Continent. They have not realized the necessity of police protection, water-supply, telegraph and telephone systems, and the postal facilities. We require them as necessities. These mark the contrast between civilization and barbarism. The principle has been demonstrated that the higher the civilization, the greater will be the number of its demands. The character and number of the necessities fix one's place in the scale of civilization. The same law prevails when we study the spiritual nature. The principle of ascent is the law of enlarged necessities. Christianity has as its Divine mission the discovery of the catholic necessities of the human

soul, and the provision for their satisfaction. Never again can humanity be satisfied in ignorance. It must possess knowledge before it will cease the struggle for knowledge. A remarkable illustration of the influence of the Christian religion in awakening the wants of men is seen in its power to create even a commerce among the nations that have been Christianized. The South Sea Islands never established commercial relations with the world until the missionary with his message came to stir the natives to the larger life, whose demands could be supplied only by opening trade with other nations.

St. Paul here teaches that Christ Jesus is related to at least four great and universal longings of humanity, as both the Revealer and Satisfier.

I. He first mentions wisdom. He was writing to a community that had many Greeks. The passion of the Greek people is to know. Doubtless the apostle thought of them as he wrote to the Corinthian Church. It is surprising how little men can know. Some can not count ten. They have no curiosity to inquire whence come the rivers that fertilize their valleys, or whither they flow. They may reap corn, but they never suspect the rich deposit of minerals under the surface of the earth. Generation follows

generation with no new achievements, and no wiser than the former. The mind has not been stirred to activity. But in Greece this curiosity had been aroused. The great excitement in Greece was concerning knowledge. Each generation contributed new facts to the fund of information. They were travelers, intent on gathering a comprehensive knowledge of the lands, peoples, the natural history, and the world in which they lived. The earth beneath and the stars above them were carefully studied. The thirst for knowledge grew imperative with them. Men of great intellectual power arose in Greece, and carried the spirit of inquiry into the more important regions. From a world of materials they went to study of mind, and later to the wise application of the facts learned to life. Thus knowledge ripened into wisdom. Socrates, the flower of the life of Greece, told his countrymen that the knowledge they had of the stars was of far less value than the knowledge they had of their souls.

Such questions as "What is man?" were discussed in their academies. "What are the tasks of a short life?" "What prizes make life a success, if won, and, if lost, make it a failure?" "What man, of all men, should they strive to imitate?" These

were questions for which they sought to find answers. The greatest of them called themselves philosophers, lovers of truth. They never reached satisfactory conclusions in their discussions. It is the pathetic fact that even the wisest of them disclaimed having found wisdom. The race of scholars of the ancient world asked questions which they could not answer. The world has followed in their footsteps. "The world by wisdom knows not God." If the Greeks standing upon tiptoe were unable to find truth wisely applied to life, Paul saw in Christ the perfect realization of what they had sought in vain. They had inquired what human life would be like at its best, and whose figure of manhood would be worthy of universal imitation. The apostle was ready to answer their question by holding before their attention the image of his Master. Jesus of Nazareth is the Man of the world. He is the answer to Pilate's question, "What is truth?" The knowledge of the world has been multiplied many-fold through the triumphs of those who have been searchers after knowledge. The volume of information is nearly unmanageable. Perhaps we need to return to the advice of Socrates, and inquire more about the truth affecting our own soul than the knowledge of the world. Much

knowledge is not necessarily much wisdom. To apply information rightly is the part of wisdom. To make what we know minister to what we are, is wisdom. To know the best, that manhood may become the best, is the highest wisdom. Is there better answer given the questions of men than this? Christ Jesus is the complement of what men ought to know and be. When human life has vainly endeavored to open the door to wisdom, it has been compelled to wait until He added His strength to its endeavors. In Him "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

II. He is the complement of righteousness. The conquering power of Rome had gone everywhere. The Roman eagle controlled the great provinces of the world. Roman soldiers were found everywhere. The relations of conqueror and conquered were thrust upon the world's thought. This period of Roman history was devoted to the establishment of law and order in all the provinces. The genius of Roman life was justice. They had conquered the world. Originally they were but a small tribe on the banks of the Tiber, but gradually they spread their conquests north, south, east, and west. Boundary-lines were obliterated because they reduced all nations to Roman provinces, but the new force that

Rome introduced into the world was law. Tribunals of justice followed the pathways of the legions of war. Many of their statutes remain as the foundations of the modern codes of jurisprudence. The genius of the Roman life was, therefore, concerning the solution of the problem arising from the relation of man to man, and nation to nation. That was their mission in the world.

But they can not be said to have successfully accomplished their mission. Justice is essentially two-sided. It is concerned, on one hand, in inquiring, "How much owest thou me?" and, on the other, it is ready to acknowledge its indebtedness to you. It is easy to exact the first demand of justice and forget the second. That is not justice, but the assertion of the power-making right. Force is not righteousness. Justice which is one-sided is unworthy of the name. Roman justice was of this kind. It had legions of mighty warriors to exact allegiance to Rome, but gave little heed to Rome's debt to the world. It developed selfishness. The hearts of its people were hard as flint. No ambition was worthy of a Roman citizen until it reached his triumph, as he ascended the steps of the Capitol with captive kings following in his train. In the cruelty this spirit developed, it became necessary to

butcher a hundred captives to afford a holiday amusement. He delighted in the slaughter of men and women in the arena. And when his cruelty ripened, the public circus was his free entertainment. Rome reached after justice, but failed to possess it. Righteousness was a closed door before the Roman civilization.

But St. Paul discovered what they failed to find. He saw what Rome needed to complete her principle of justice. What was lacking in their notion of right? It was the element of love. That had never entered their conception of justice. The apostle discovered that Jesus Christ is the embodiment of Eternal Love for the world, and is therefore the best expression of righteousness.

Is not this the demand of the age in which we live? Do you not discover that the Roman question is at the heart of the supreme problem of this age? It is the relation of man to man, of employer to the employed, of the rich to the poor, of the government of the nation to the individual, that presses upon our attention in these days. We shall never find answers to our problems by taking men by the throat and demanding that they pay us what they owe, while we forget to pay what we owe them. The law of fair dealing must prevail. Sympathy

and helpfulness are as valuable as wage and productiveness. We have stood upon tiptoe, and organized capital and organized labor have vainly striven to open the door to the largest righteousness. The Carpenter of Nazareth stands close at hand to unlatch the door that we may go into righteousness. No other law than His Golden Rule will express the eternal answers to the questions of righteousness. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." The righteousness of faith is the ultimate righteousness of the world. It is buried in the heart, but it speaks through the lips and works through the hands.

III. Christ is the complement of a third great longing of humanity. That is the desire to know God and be holy. Everywhere St. Paul went he found the Jews, men of his own nation. They were at the centers of trade. The Gospel was first offered them wherever St. Paul went. They were the religious race of the world. The genius of the Hebrew is for holiness. The Jewish people occupied a unique place among the nations. His tendencies and successes were marked in religious development. When the apostle recalled what a mighty factor this longing for sanctification had been in history, he thought of his own nation, whose won-

derful influence was associated with this demand. The Jew had no valuable art, no philosophy, until he borrowed it from his neighbors. He was not possessed of the conquering instinct. The few wars of conquest of his history were only enough to possess the land promised in the covenant of God with His people. Though he often dreamed of conquest and of a world-power he was too timid to undertake the campaign. He was too much attached to the narrow strip of the land of his birth to realize his dreams. But his genius took a loftier flight. The mission of his race was nobler than war, sublimer than art or poetry. In him the desire to realize God asserted itself with all force. The poet-king sang the longings of his race: "As the hart panteth after the water-brook, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God." "O God, Thou art my God, early will I seek Thee! My soul thirsteth after Thee. My soul longeth for Thee in a thirsty land." These are some of the utterances of the singers of Israel. They are the voice of the entire nation. The highest aspiration of the Jew was to walk with God, and his greatest blessedness was to be called a saint.

Another side of this same disposition may be seen in the personal sense of distance from God,

He felt in his inmost soul that he was unworthy of such companionship. Because he was a sinner he could not have fellowship with God. While the intellectual life was developed in the Greek nation, conscience unfolded its majestic authority in the Jewish nation. Conscience was the scourge of terror for every sinful soul. The question which was carried in his heart was, "How can I escape my sin?" "How can I be just with God?" "How may I walk with Him?" But, like the Roman and the Greek, he never claimed to have found satisfaction. He never reached the purity of life toward which he struggled. He tried the punctilious observance of many rules of conduct, but his ideal always mocked his effort. The rites of sacrifice and the rivers of blood shed for the temple offerings failed to wash away his sin.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ came as a satisfying answer to that long and passionate cry for heart-purity. It said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" St. Paul had sounded the depths of the Jewish heart; he understood the mission of his race to be the voice crying for moral purity in the wilderness of the world. As a Jew he cried out, "O, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

He likewise knew of a satisfaction when God revealed the remedy for his ailment of sin, and he shouted, "Thanks be to God through our Lord Jesus Christ!" He took as his message to the world that "He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

This need is realized in every human heart. This is the soul's deepest and most sacred need. It demands satisfaction. The highest life calls for a satisfying knowledge of sins forgiven. Where shall this great religious longing find its reply except in Jesus Christ?

"I could not do without Thee;
No other friend can read
The spirit's strange, deep longings,
Interpreting its need;
No human heart could enter
Each dim recess of mine,
And soothe and hush and calm it,
O blessed Lord, like Thine."

The way of holiness is the way of Christ's cross. The friendship of Jesus is the guarantee of sanctity. He opened the gates of holiness to human life. He is made our sanctification. "There is none other name given among men whereby we must be saved." "There is one God and one mediator be-

tween God and man, the man Christ Jesus; who gave Himself a ransom for all."

IV. The last great cry of the human heart, here mentioned, is redemption. These deep desires of human nature are found everywhere. And this craving for a full redemption is worthy of a place with the others. The sweep of this longing reaches an assurance of immortality. The perfect redemption here presented is the loosing of the soul from every bond that holds it enslaved. Life and immortality are brought to light in the Gospel. This cry of the soul found no precious assurance without Christ and His work. The instinct of immortality is native to the human race. The date of the best expression of this craving can not be clearly set. The necessity of some great national emphasis, as in the other desires, does not appear. Men in all ages have realized the passion for immortal life. Some historians trace it through two countries lying on the border-land of civilization.

But having asserted itself, the longing has died out of the soul. Now and then, men may talk of returning to life simple as that of a dog, but such is impossible. Rousseau advocated a return to the state of nature, in which there would be no more curiosity to know or passion for wisdom than that

of the savage ; but the suggestion brings its answer of impossibility of such return to the simplicity of want. Desire for wisdom and justice may die out of our hearts, but the passion for immortality will never cease. Special experiences will demonstrate the imperative demand of this assurance. The discovery of the inequalities of human life presses the philosophic demand for some more perfect world, where the redress for wrongs and the rewards of virtue may be had. Slaves, whose miseries find no release, needed a message of redemption. Some of the princely souls of history have suffered in bondage of body. What a message from heaven to all who suffered the wrongs of slavery ! The modern spectacle of the great prosperity of the wicked and the limitations of the righteous, is the same question that vexed the spirit of the psalmist as he climbed toward Zion. The answer to it is the one he discovered when he said, "It was too painful for me, until I went into the sanctuary of God ; then understood I their end." "Wrong may be forever on the throne and right on the scaffold," but the very injustice of their places makes a philosophic necessity of some future life. To another this passion for the immortal and redeemed life asserts itself through intense love. It may be the love of

wisdom. It may be the appreciation of courage. It may declare itself in devotion to some moral quality. Or, in the attachment of one heart for another, the soul may be stirred to desire this larger life of immortality. The thought that death can interpose between the soul and its ideals is intolerable. Love cries out for a redemption from the bondage of death.

“Alas for him who never sees
The stars shine through his cypress trees!
Who, hopeless, lays his dead away,
Nor looks to see the breaking day
Across the mournful marbles play;
Who hath not learned, in hours of faith,
The truth to flesh and sense unknown,
That Life is ever lord of Death,
And Love can never lose its own!”

Perhaps from the consciousness we have that the spirit of man must not die, we have one of the most convincing intimations of the immortal life. There is the universal conviction that after death there is a punishment which follows the commission of crime, and that at the time of death it gathers around the soul, looking back upon a career of sin unpardoned. In that dread hour men know that they have not done with their sins, but have to face them beyond the veil of time. Immortality is set before us, not only as a great hope, but as a great

terror. We passionately long for it, and then recoil from it with guilty fear. Who can reconcile this contradiction? Who shall enable us confidently to expect that the eternity we have desired shall not bring the terror of condemnation for our wrongdoing? St. Paul gives the answer when he declares that "Christ is made unto us redemption." He has released us from the terror of death. In Him life and immortality have been brought to light. In Him fear is changed to joy. There is a better word in the Gospel than immortality: it is the word of Jesus answering this great hope, "eternal life." That implies more than duration of time, but quality. It is the life which blends the present and the future in one. It sets before us the state into which we are called to enter now, and in which we shall be when we find ourselves in the Father's house. Mere continued existence has no precious promise for us. Immortality plus eternal life is the joyful assurance of the Gospel. Life and immortality are great lessons of Christ Jesus.

This glorious message of joy meets us in every strait of life. It has comfort, light, assurance, and help for all who will trust themselves to its power. It is the Gospel suited to the best and truest of such lives. It is not fitted to the shallow moods of the soul, when it is blinded by the glare and satisfied

with the glitter of vulgar prizes. But when we are our noblest selves, it brings Divine satisfaction for our longings.

Those noble souls who have "followed the gleam," and found a bright path to the perfect life, ascribe all praise of their redemption to Christ Jesus their Lord. It is said that Apelles once visited his former pupil, Protogenes of Rhodes. He found his friend absent. Looking about the studio, Apelles discovered a partly finished canvas on an easel. Seating himself before it, he completed the work. Covering it with care, he withdrew to the draperies to wait the return of his former pupil. Protogenes returned, and began his work on the half-completed picture. Lifting the covering, and discovering what had been done, he exclaimed, "Apelles has been here; no one else could paint like that." It is the touch of the great artist whose infinite skill and love complete life's fairest picture. "Ye are complete in Him." Imperfect men and women have been lifted to such beauty and power in Him that we may exclaim, "Christ Jesus has been here, for no one but the Divine Savior could accomplish that triumphant work!"

"Christ's life our code, his cross our creed,
Our common, glad confession be;
Our deepest wants, our highest aims
Find their fulfillment, Lord, in Thee.

Dear Son of God ! Thy blessed will
Our hearts would own, with saints above ;
All life is larger for Thy law,
All service sweeter for Thy love.

Thy life our code ! in letters clear
We read our duty day by day,
Thy footsteps tracing eagerly,
Who art the truth, the life, the way.

Thy cross our creed ! Thy boundless love
A ransomed world at last shall laud,
And crown Thee their Eternal King,
O Lord of Glory ! Lamb of God !"

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